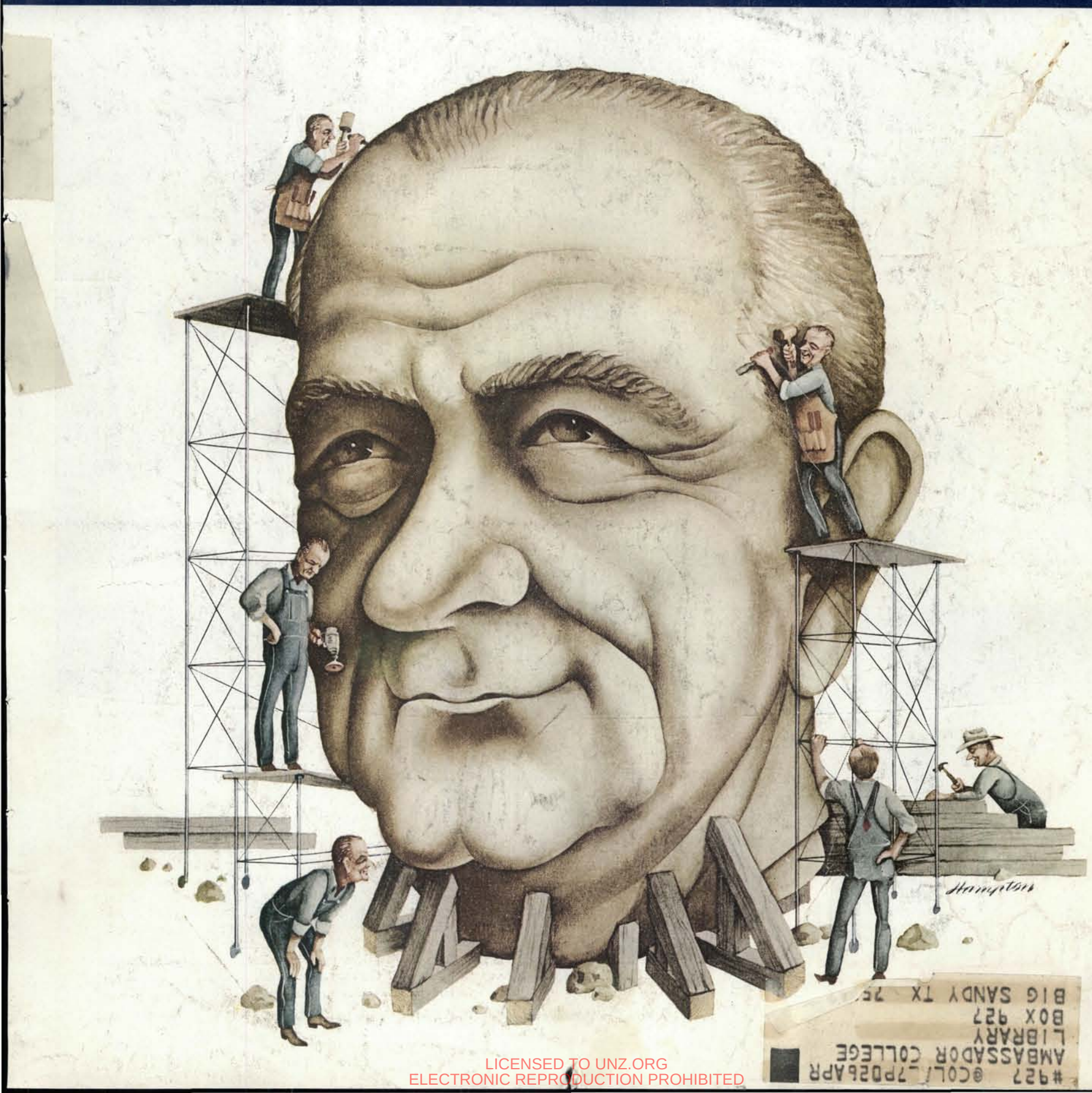
he Saturday Evening Post · September 11, 1965 · 25c

# POST

## HOMETOWN, U.S.A
A sentimental journey through
a boyhood in a vanished era

## ELVIS PRESLEY

A searching report on
## LYNDON B. JOHNSON: THE MAN BEHIND THE IMAGE

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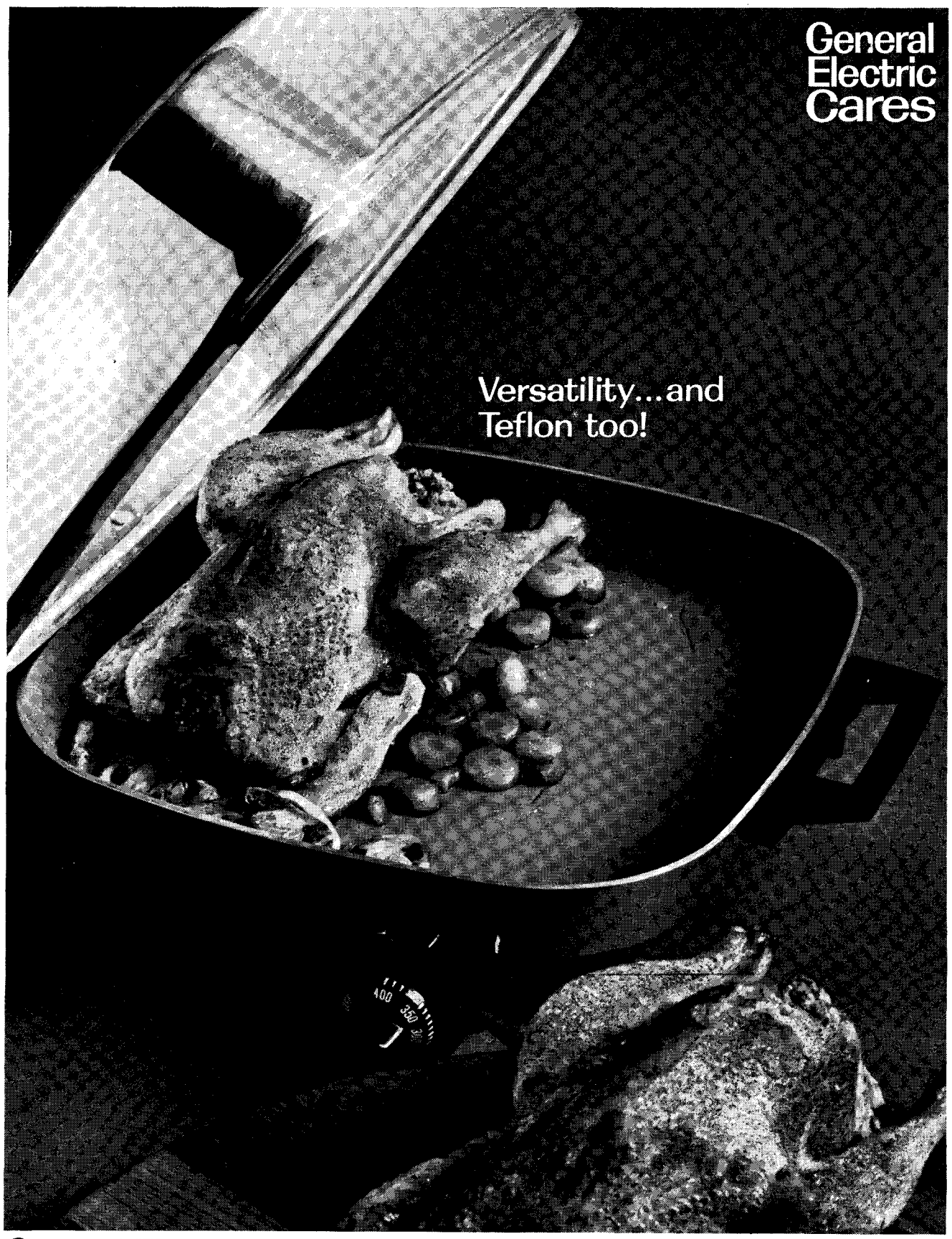

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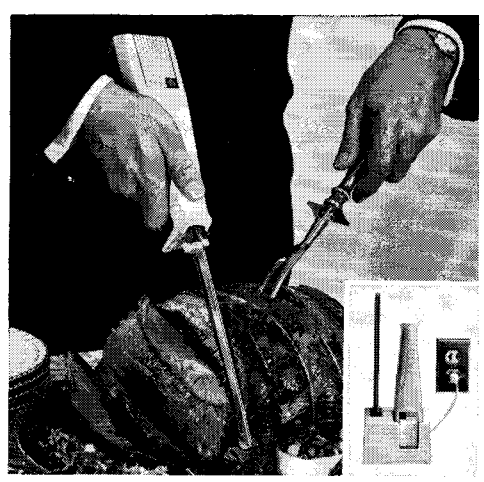

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POST

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## About this issue

In trying to find the real Lyndon Johnson behind the public image, LEWIS H. LAPHAM discovered that the only way to keep up with his subject was to give up all thought of independent movement and stay close to the President. One weekend the White House staff had assured him Mr. Johnson was leaving for Texas, but when Lapham arrived in Austin, he learned that the President had gone to Camp David, Md. Lapham, who joined *The Post* in 1962, is a former reporter for the San Francisco *Examiner* and the New York *Herald Tribune*. . . . EDMUND G. LOVE lives in Manhattan, a much-different atmosphere from that of his boyhood Michigan, and is the author of *Subways Are for Sleeping*. . . . THOMAS MEEHAN, who investigated the Courrèges fashion phenomenon, is a member of the editorial staff of *The New Yorker*. . . . Author ALLAN SHERMAN is best known as a TV performer and the creator of the record *My Son, the Folk Singer*./Cover illustration by BLAKE HAMPTON.

*Lewis Lapham with L.B.J.*

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# Letters

## Memories of J. F. K.

MY TWELVE YEARS WITH KENNEDY [August 14] is a wonderfully human story about a great man. Evelyn Lincoln has shown us a different and sometimes amusing side of our late President.

TERRY L. TURNER
*Covina, Calif.*

• John F. Kennedy was an exciting man, and the author has captured that excitement in her memoirs.

MRS. ERIKA HALLISCH
*Milwaukee, Wis.*

• I have never been able to understand why, in many instances, an employer will treat a maid in his employ with more courtesy and consideration than he extends to his secretary. It is rather surprising that the late President Kennedy, who was supposed to have been such a delightful person, ran true to form, and was rather childish and not very considerate of Mrs. Lincoln.

ELEANOR S. MILLER
*Philadelphia, Pa.*

• This is the way I will remember him always, and would want my children to remember him. I have never before read an article on the late President that made me admire him and at the same time made me feel so close to him myself.

MRS. KEITH B. ALLEN
*Mountain View, Calif.*

• As an American, a Democrat, an admirer of the late President Kennedy, and as a secretary, may I say that I think the first installment of Mrs. Lincoln's "memoirs" about J.F.K. are, to say the least, in extremely poor taste. One of the first rules a good secretary learns is that the foibles and idiosyncrasies of one's boss are strictly kept within the confines of the office.

Perhaps some of the current "reminiscing" about John F. Kennedy has historical value, but the entire outburst reeks of commercialism.

ROSALIE M. BROCKETT
*Akron, Ohio*

## The Cord

A statement appears in James Atwater's interesting article IS AMERICA READY FOR THE CORD? [August 14] which confuses me: "The Cord was the hit . . . when it was introduced in 1936. . . ."

My roommate at Sigma Alpha Epsilon house at the University of Wisconsin had a Cord roadster *in 1932*. Needless to say, I loved to double date with him—even if it meant subjecting a Delta Gamma to a rumble seat on a cold Wisconsin winter night.

FREDERICK PEDERSON
*Sparta, Wis.*

• The article has a discrepancy which I'd like to correct in the interest of historical accuracy. It is stated that "When sales of his other cars started to lag in the mid-'30's, Cord decided to take the gamble of producing the revolutionary car for which he is still best remembered." This alludes to the Model 810 and later 812 of the 1936–37 period. Nowhere in the article is the earlier and also front-driven Model L-29 Cord mentioned, which was produced between 1929 and 1932. A total number of 4,429 units were made; the later 810 and 812 cars never approached that figure.

KEITH MARVIN
*Troy, N.Y.*

## Hypocrisy

IN SPEAKING OUT, Sir Denis Brogan analyzes the change from Victorian restraint to modern license [HYPOCRISY IS NO SIN, August 14], and concludes that there may be more virtue in falsehood than fact! If virtue describes the beneficial use of things, and falsehood and facts are things, it depends on how these things are used, whether their employment is a vice or a virtue (e.g., fire may be used to warm a home or to destroy it).

Also, facts are like the clothes we wear. It is folly to put the dirty ones on the line and expect the airing to clean them.

JIM DENNON
*Seaside, Oreg.*

• D. W. Brogan's essay defending hypocrisy is amusing and well-reasoned. I have no doubt that in presenting this viewpoint he is perfectly sincere.

ERNEST WERNER
*Ithaca, N.Y.*

• It may just be possible that thoughtful hypocrisy may save us from convincing ourselves that we are wholly depraved. I prefer to believe men are good. Call it what you will, but it's a cinch we will be better off socially if we pretend to be good, and who can question that we may eventually become a little bit more like the thing we pretend to be?

EDWARD S. BROWN, JR.
*Albuquerque, N. Mex.*

• Sir Denis Brogan defends only a limited type of hypocrisy—a type, in fact, more properly labeled *refinement* or *good taste*. Civilized living demands such a veneer. Hypocrisy in its larger sense remains contemptible, standing as it does for *pretended virtue* (honesty, affection, decency), simulated in order to attain a selfish objective at someone else's expense.

Surely the professor is kidding when he asserts that dictators are sincere. Aren't gentlemen of that stripe merely masters in concealing self-interest? Aren't they supreme examples of looking out for No. 1, themselves, in the guise of benefiting great numbers?

JOSEPH GANCHER
*Albany, N.Y.*

• Man must recognize his hypocritical thinking for what it really is—an avoidance of the extra effort required by honor and integrity. Social harmony will only be realized when men begin to communicate with each other with this honor and integrity.

We are about to inherit the universe. We are far from mentally prepared for this tremendous responsibility. Professor Brogan does not help matters.

MARTIN R. NORTHRUP
*Miami, Fla.*

## 20 years after

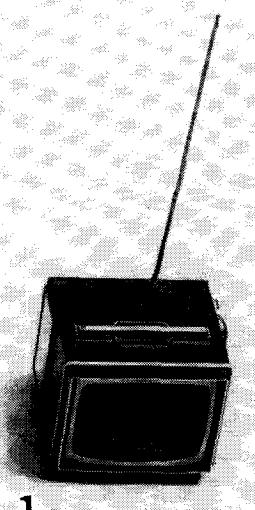
Rafael Steinberg's HIROSHIMA: IN A FLASH IT WAS GONE [August 14] is a most moving account of the 20-year aftermath of an act by the United States in which every American feels such a sense of personal involvement that any reference to it stirs the unease of moral questioning.

Would an equally sensitive account by a Japanese author in a Japanese publication, of a day which Franklin D. Roosevelt predicted would "live in infamy," the day of the Japanese attack on an unsuspecting and sleeping Pearl Harbor, call to the attention of the people of Japan that they have been forgiven as much as they have been called upon to forgive?

RUTH ADAMS KNIGHT
*South Pasadena, Calif.*

• I might feel a little more guilty if I hadn't seen the tomb the Japanese made of the battleship Arizona, or the military


We make portables for the den
and portables for the bedroom



and a play-anywhere transistor for places nobody ever thought of taking a portable.

And here are three hard-headed reasons for buying one.

One, a portable should really be a portable; so we make ours extra light. (Our 12"* weighs 15 pounds.)

Two, our prices start at $89.95.**

And three, we think if you say a set's good, you should be able to back it up in writing. We're able: The General Electric Company warrants to the purchaser of each "B" Line General Electric Portable Television Receiver† . . . Free repair, (including labor and parts), in the event of manufacturing defects occurring during the first ninety (90) days from the date of original purchase, provided the receiver, (including proof of the purchase date), is brought to and picked up from an Authorized General Electric Television Service Station anywhere in the USA!

†All portable sets with a diagonal screen measurement of 19" or less.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

*Diagonal measurement. **Suggested list. 12" Adventurer I, pictured above, second row, far right.

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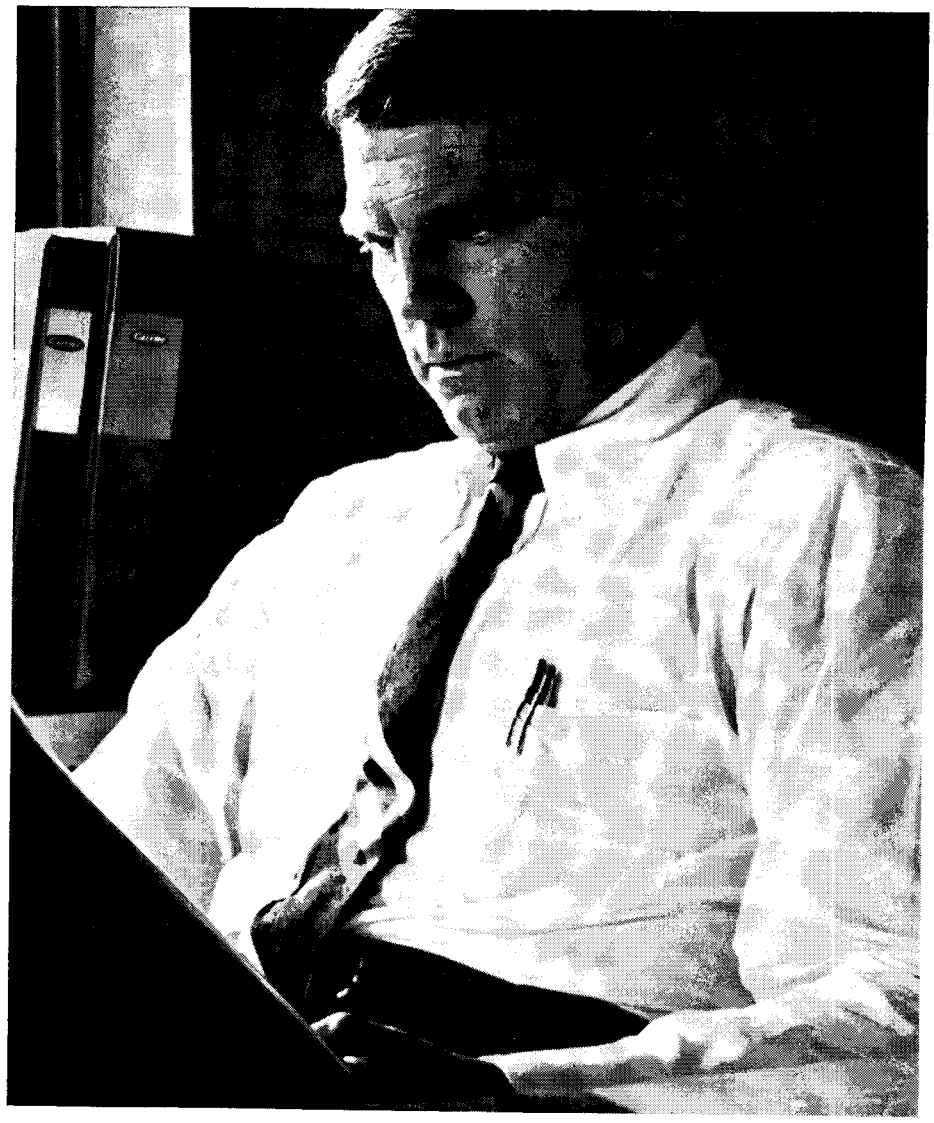
# Choose Carrier air conditioning because of the dependable man who sells it



**The skill of the Carrier Dealer is as important to you as the quality of our equipment. He's the man who knows the most about planning, installing and servicing good air conditioning. Another reason why more people put their confidence in Carrier than in any other make.**

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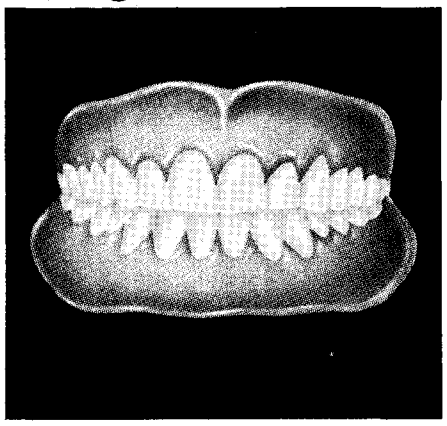
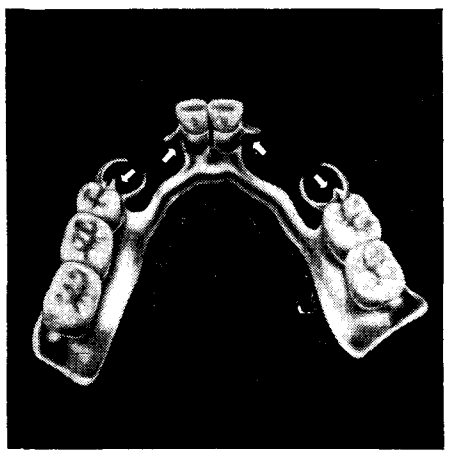
# Why So Many Dentists Say

## "Soak Dentures or Bridges in KLEENITE"



**Special "fast-soak" formula restores original whiteness and true natural color.**



Modern dentures are expensive, and like fine jewelry they are easily damaged. Cleaning with abrasive pastes or hard brushing may scratch dentures . . . may cause 'teeth' to be dropped or broken.

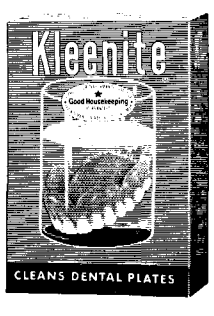
But today there's a newer, safer way to clean dentures—*soak* them clean in KLEENITE. This fast-acting powder soaks away discolorations—even smoke stains and film. It restores original whiteness and true natural color.

KLEENITE's fast-soak formula combines *three* stain-removing actions: (1) detergent; (2) solvent; (3) oxidizer. Special soak-in surfactant removes stains that pastes and brushes can't reach.

Dentists have discovered that soaking in KLEENITE beats even the hardest brushing with an ordinary dentifrice. It cleans denture surfaces faster—even soaks away deeply embedded stains. Restores original whiteness to teeth and pinkness to gums. KLEENITE is available at all drug counters.

**More Dentists Now Give KLEENITE To Denture Patients**

than all other denture cleansers—pastes or powders—combined. A recent coast-to-coast survey proves it.





# Letters

cemetery at Manila, where 55,000 American and Filipino soldiers lie, or if I had never visited Wake Island, or talked to survivors of the Bataan death march. Let Mr. Steinberg and others of his ilk cover themselves with sackcloth and ashes, but as for me, my only regret is that we couldn't use the bomb sooner, and perhaps have saved a few of those who died at Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

DAVID L. MCDANIEL
*Imperial Beach, Calif.*

● My scorched soul will never again know peace. Rafael Steinberg's masterpiece should be indelibly imprinted within the heart of all humanity.

MRS. SALOME J. QUICK
*Westboro, Mass.*

● Your editorial REFLECTIONS ON HIROSHIMA [August 14] contains many sobering thoughts about the future but much nonsense about the past. Instead of shedding tears over those killed in Hiroshima, you ought to be thinking about the many more servicemen, Japanese as well as American, who would have been killed or maimed in conventional warfare had the bomb not halted the war as quickly as it did. What difference does it make how the dead were killed? Would they be less dead if they had been killed by bayonets or conventional bombs?

ANTHONY WENTWORTH MORSS
*Manchester, Mass.*

● Twenty years ago I was a B-29 navigator-radar-bombardier based on Guam. We took off every third evening about five o'clock and flew until 10 or 10:30 the next morning. Our targets were oil refineries. We did a professional job on the Japanese Empire, particularly on their ability to wage war and defend themselves. They received from us, the Navy lying offshore and the fighters that strafed them all the way from Iwo, everything they had coming.

When the news of the atom bomb reached us, I was shocked and horrified. As a soldier and airman, I would have dropped it myself—on orders—but personally I would not have liked the idea unless the target had been a military one. This is not hindsight, but exactly as I felt as a citizen-soldier on Guam in 1945. I still feel this way today.

The atom bomb didn't win the war; the war was already won through years of blood-letting and sacrifice. The bunglers in Washington who allowed the sorry mess at Pearl Harbor (and later Yalta and Potsdam) succeeded only in wiping out two Japanese cities with their women, children and some poor prisoners of war unfortunate enough to be present.

THOMAS G. PATRICK
*Mundelein, Ill.*

● Had we fully utilized the peace potential of the bomb by convincing the Russians and the world that we would use it to prevent war and to enforce inspections and prohibitions against any other nation's attempt to develop a similar weapon, the world could have been at peace forever. A "Pax Atomica" if you will, wherein the threat or the localized use of the bomb could have been used to enforce peace, arbitration talks and settlements between dissident nations.

The real horror of this atomic anniversary is not that we dropped the bomb, but that we did not use it properly thereafter. Well might we weep for those hapless victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Their ashes can only commemorate the lost and probably the last opportunity for peace in the world.

GEORGE WAIDNER
*Pikesville, Md.*

● Concerning your editorial, the person who "once said that the worst crime was to treat human beings as though they were objects" was certainly thinking of human relations on an individual, person-to-person basis. I myself consider it a blessing that it is possible that people, especially an enemy people, can be rendered inconsequential, as mere objects. If it were not so, we would probably have become a nation of conscience-stricken pacifists and would undoubtedly have lost our freedom long ago.

WENDELL C. HOLT
*Chicago, Ill.*

● Yes, my heart is weighted with grief for the people of Hiroshima. Yes, my mind races with ugly pictures of death and disfiguration. Yes, my soul apologizes for the cargo *Enola Gay* carried.

And the 291,557 Americans dead in graves around the world? And the men entombed in the ships at the bottom of Pearl Harbor? And the pharmacist I know, who came back near-blind and near-crippled from a Japanese prison camp?

No, no, no! Not the crime of America against Japan, nor Japan against America, but rather the evil that man perpetrates on man must give us pause.

God forbid . . . and forgive.

CHARLES M. LUTHER
*Beeville, Tex.*

## Vietnam's Premier Ky

Thank God that at least one popular magazine will snipe at the purveyors of ignorance and lies about Vietnam. I want to express my sincere appreciation of your little exposure of General Nguyen Cao Ky [OUR MAN IN SAIGON, July 31].

JOHN M. MURRAY
*Long Beach, Calif.*

● In your editorial section you painted a very unfair verbal picture of Premier Ky. The political items you listed ["He . . . had a suspected Communist terrorist executed in public . . . broke off diplomatic relations with France, ordered the closing of Saigon newspapers and threatened to shoot anyone he considers guilty of profiteering."] along with other changes have helped to stabilize South Vietnam's government. I hope all Americans will support this "unusual" man.

ROBERT SULLIVAN
*Portsmouth, N.H.*

## Monkey business

In your May 22 issue, Thomas Berger wrote a story entitled A MONKEY OF HIS OWN, in which he mentions the Morris, Brown & Co. as a supplier of monkeys. As a result, our organization has received several letters like this one: "In regard to your advertisement in one of the magazines that I take, you have monkeys for sale. I would like some information on same. How big do they grow? What kind are they, and are females available? Will you guarantee a live delivery?"

However, we only specialize in peppermint, spearmint and dillweed oils.

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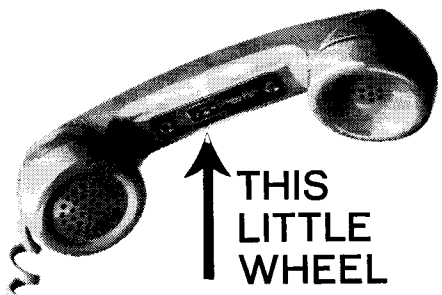
3–Ollie Atkins. • 10–Carroll Seghers II. • 14–Wide World. • 21–Ollie Atkins. • 22–Czermanski. • 23, 24–Ollie Atkins. 25–Jules Feiffer, Ollie Atkins. • 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31–Greene-Eula. • 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 43, 44, 46, 47–Hans Namuth. 65–Arnold Roth, Ollie Atkins. • 66-67, 71–Ollie Atkins. • 76–Gilloon, Bob Moreland (Gilloon), M-G-M. • 77–Three by UPI, Wide World, M-G-M. • 78–M-G-M. • 79–Wide World, two by Bob Williams (Gilloon). • 80–Naiad Einsel.

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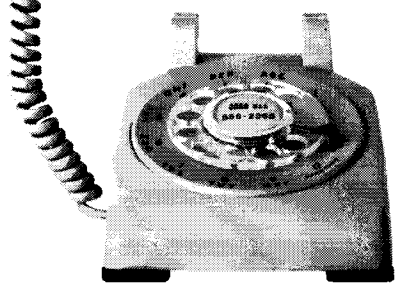

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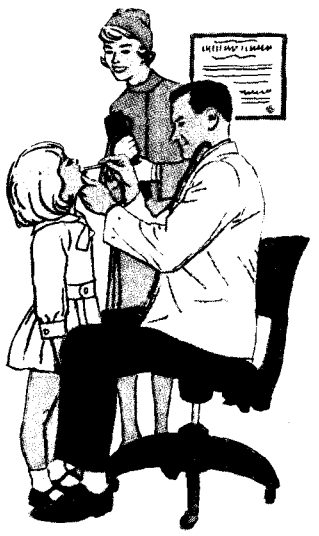

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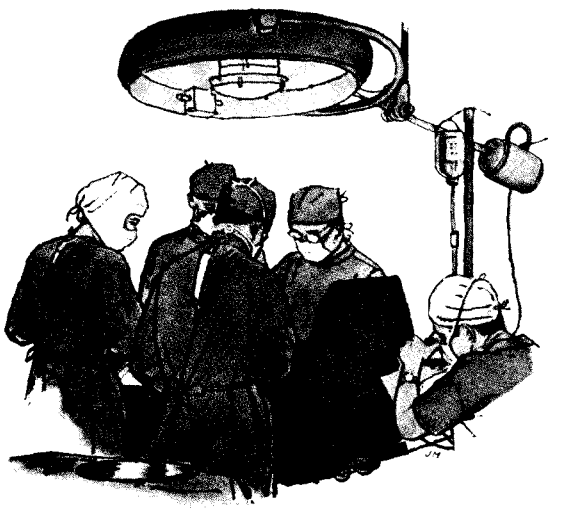

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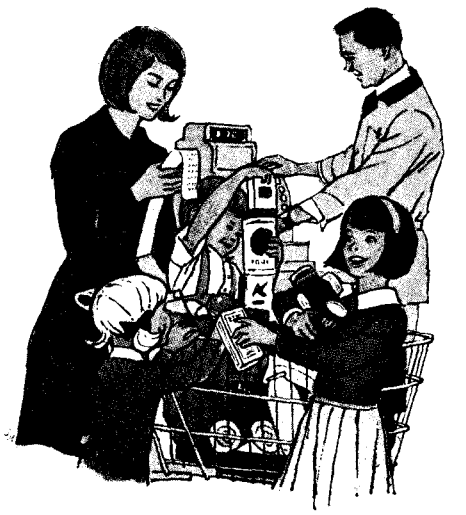

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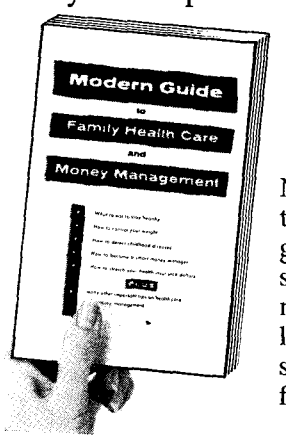


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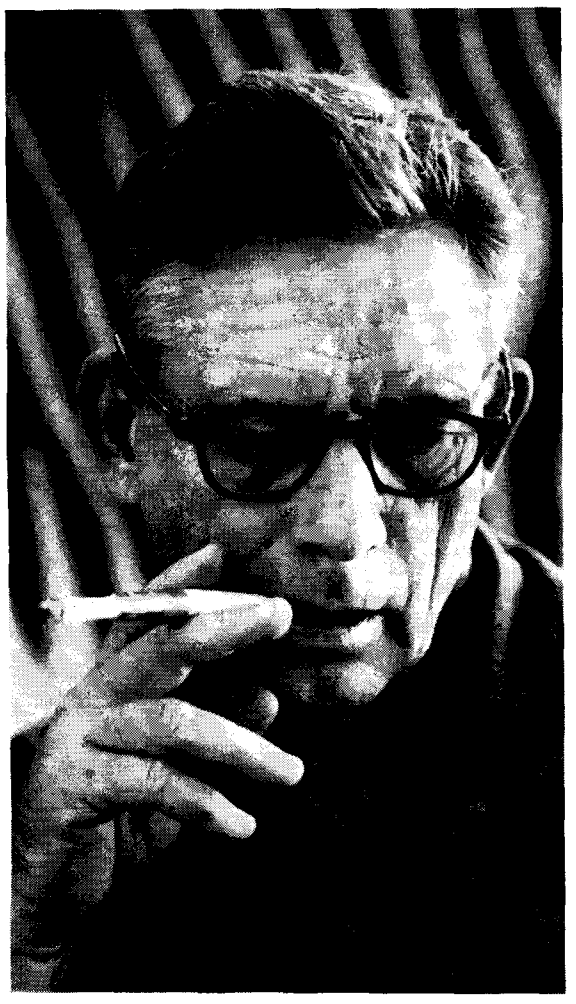
Speaking Out

# Teen-agers are the greatest people

*by Philip Wylie*

An iconoclastic and prolific author for more than 30 years, Mr. Wylie will publish a new book, *They Both Were Naked*, this fall. Among his best-known works is his 1942 book *Generation of Vipers*, a scathing attack on "*momism*."



The finest people on earth, the finest there ever were, are America's minor citizens, our kids, teen-agers included. And yet we oblige our kids to live under the handicap of prejudices we impose on them. Say "juvenile," and nine grown people in ten will think "delinquent." We believe kids are steadily getting worse, in every way. Authorities warn us never to pick up a teen-age hitchhiker. Haven't parents by the million literally lost control of their offspring? And aren't college kids rioting? What about the way they dance? Their music?

And so on. And on. Endlessly, and endless nonsense and libel.

Older citizens are automatically appalled by almost everything our kids do. If kids do it, it's bad, even if their elders do it themselves without self-criticism. One recent shock came from California undergraduates who demanded the right to use four-letter words (which some students carried around on placards). But our authors have won that right long since—and many tediously exploit it. Many, even most men utter the same words when they stub their toes or bump their heads. Many people cannot converse without these words, and everybody knows them: They appeared, several of them, in the version of the *Bible* used in my boyhood. Yet adult America reacted to the placard ploy of the undergraduates as if it were some ultimate proof of the depravity of America's kids. What grown-ups appreciated the humor of that antic, the *reductio-ad-absurdum* it implied, the justifiable critique of our general hypocrisy? Who laughed? Nobody.

For almost nobody in our land ever laughs *with* our kids, nowadays. Few adults even laugh *at* kids with that tender and affectionate understanding their behavior so often entreats.

Nobody takes notice of the myriads of boys and girls who, every June, are awarded the degrees for which they bled. But let one tiny band of high-school kids be caught trying out that relatively unharmful and very tempting stuff, marijuana, and every kid becomes the object of vast suspicion and fear.

No nation ever before undertook such massive blackguarding of its own young.

We adults not only live in terror of our kids' violence, but we impute to them a shuddersome amorality in Adult America's Topic A: Sex. Endless "studies" pronounce that many girls consider virginity a social handicap, fidelity a joke, cohabitation with a "steady" or a fiancé a normal thing—all that. Frightened as we are, we are only too eager to accept all such accusation without question. What's more, we adults endlessly imply that an unmarried girl who sleeps with one man—let alone two or 20—is irreparably damaged. Yet at the same time we talk about our own "changing morals" and equate this with enlightenment. When any such change turns up in teen-agers, it's different. Then it's delinquency. And why is this sort of change taking place among some kids? Because we, as parents, are the ones who widely tend to urge sexual precocity on our young, girls especially—dressing them as semi-adults in their earliest teens and encouraging them to date, to go out with boys and become popular—all, in a national atmosphere so thick with eroticism that sex is used not only to catch bridegrooms but to sell gadgets besides.

It is true that far too many of our young people are marrying at too early an age. And venereal disease is still a plague. But these problems are the direct or indirect result of our parental and especially maternal practice of rushing girls of 14, 13, even 12, toward pseudo-womanhood—and of our national preoccupation with sexiness, an omnipresent near-fiat to make love. Too many kids are venereal, too many teen-age brides go pregnant to the altar, and many more are prematurely wed simply to obtain sanction for doing what the American mode commands. Yet young America sees how myriads of mothers and fathers turn to promiscuity, sometimes with mutual consent, to escape the tedium of fidelity. Young America is thoroughly disgusted with the hypocrisy and inconsistency of such adult sex morals. What our young people *are* doing, in talk and frequently in act, can best be called *research*. They are trying to find out what the true, real, ideal and satisfying sex life should be. They want no part of the venerable custom of talking one way and behaving another. Our kids are trying to distinguish acts of love, lovingly engaged in but legally forbidden, from real crime. They are trying to lift love from outworn contexts. If they manage, and only then, they will be able to discover *truly* what is virtue, what is love. Those adults who shudder over the alleged sexual immorality of our young people have therefore failed to note its shining ingredient of integrity . . . or, maybe, their own lack of it.

Actually what we mean by our accusations of increase in sexual activity is an increase over sex behavior in America and England during the Victorian Age. And that half century of prudery and the double standard was not so much chaste as perfidious. Part of the marvel of our kids, then, is their attainment of what they are in the face of ceaseless, national double-talk by the adult world.

Young Americans are faced with two other handicaps without historical precedent. The first is that aspect of our society about which we generally boast the loudest: our affluence. Each artifact—car, pair of cars, TV, color TV, dishwasher, power mower, hi-fi—is held to be evidence of success and status. That consensus peculiarly affects youth, for young people are first and most engaged in a specific drive for the status of an adult. They are also intensely conformist to their group and its ideals and ideas—or its rejection of both—for the reason that they are young and have not yet had time to find themselves, to become individuals. If every family in our "affluent society" were, in fact, affluent, these circumstances would not pose so compelling and novel a problem. All kids could or would have color TV's, backyard swimming pools, the works. But since the adults who have everything—or can have it—are very few in number, most young Americans tend to see themselves as deprived, as unfairly diminished in status, in effect, as victims of inadequate parents. A certain amount of hostility toward most elders automatically arises from that situation—often a very great amount. When many kids drive their own cars to high school, or are driven there, what sensation does it create in every status-avid, conformist kid who has to take a bus—or walk? With our adult values we have set up a society wherein the drives of youth are likely to lead to temptations of a kind and an intensity without precedent. If adult Americans regarded intellectual, artistic, scientific and truly *human* attainment as the highest evidence of status and the proof of human "maturity," young Americans would far less often become delinquent or turn to crime.

Finally, all Americans of 20 years or less have spent their entire lives in a time that is fundamentally and absolutely different from any past era: the Atomic Age. Most adults I know have failed in at least some degree to realign their thoughts and emotions with the facts about this condition. Few truly realize that national power, as hitherto conceived, no longer exists. Our lives are permanently at stake and perpetually the possible forfeit to our ideal of freedom.

It is natural enough that students want peace—even when there is no peace and will be no peace. They want our troops out of the Dominican Republic, out of Vietnam. Such "wants," of course, fail to take the measure of reality. Such sentiments are purely escapist—indicating a wish to evade what cannot be evaded short of the surrender of America and freedom. But the kids' desire to run themselves and their institutions merely reflects their certainty of our botch of things, without considering their own lack of maturity and lack of

*One measure of a democracy's strength is the freedom of its citizens to speak out—to dissent from the popular view. Although the editors often disagree with the opinions expressed in Speaking Out, they dedicate the series to that freedom.*



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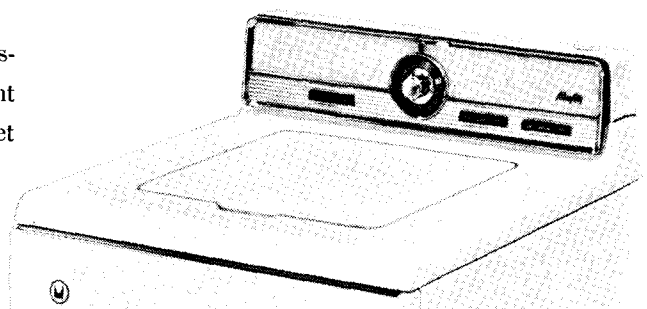

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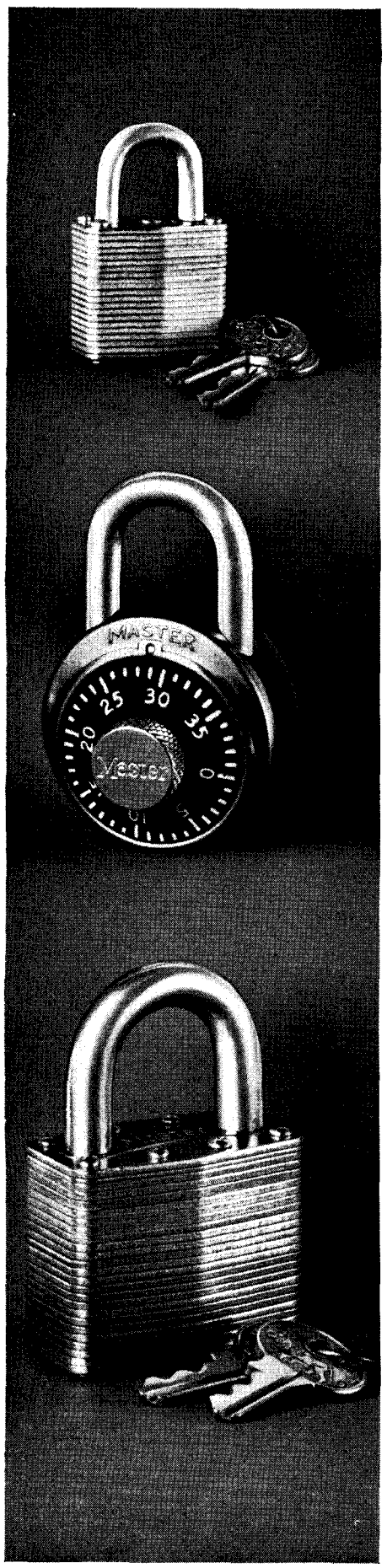

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skills. It merely represents an illusion, one that is embraced because of justified disillusion and their genuine delusion—by us.

We should be very tolerant of our kids' intolerance, and of their ignorance. For the rebelliousness of our young is a solid sign of one prime virtue: a will to change a world that sorely needs it. They are "for" some noble propositions, too, even at their tender age: civil rights, to give one example. If in their new enthusiasms they are sometimes misled, who misled them?

The fundamental complaint of young Americans, however, does not refer to the hypocrisies, lies, errors, blunders and problems they have inherited. It is, instead, this: *that they cannot talk with grown people.* From the hundreds of kids with whom I've talked or corresponded, I have come to believe that the very great majority of our kids have never enjoyed an intimate friendship with even one grown person. Why not? When you ask that, you get one answer: Their efforts to communicate with us are invariably and completely squelched. The proper designation of these luckless millions of youngsters is the Squelched Generation.

Grown people—most of them, anyway—find any attempt to talk *with* this young generation is dangerous. It is dangerous for the very reason that America's kids are, as I said at the beginning, the finest people living. For one thing, they are far better educated in far greater numbers than any prior group in human history, and adults' mental obsolescence or laziness soon shows—or worse, perhaps, some aspect of a prejudice shows. When the passing teen-ager wants to chatter a bit about Sartre and Existentialism, quasars, the menace of sonic boom, we rat out because we cannot get in the act and maintain our pretended status.

Worst of all, however, is our propaganda-instilled certainty that kids, excepting maybe our own and a few we know slightly, are too debauched and worthless for any regard. For the public denigration of American youth is Big Business these days, the source of power and money to innumerable agencies, including police at every level. And so, we solemnly hear and inanely accept "official" announcements of the "annual rise of juvenile delinquency and crime," of youthful wickedness. Actually, so far as I can find an honest figure, the J. D. rate is about 2 percent, or less than half the adult ratio of known offenders. And Federal tables show that convictions of minors have been decreasing for many years. But how many adults care about that? Very few. The rest accept the relentless, self-seeking propaganda from those who have a vested interest in convincing everybody that all minors are rapidly degenerating.

No great nation has ever before subjected its youth to such a libel. No wonder communications between generations have collapsed.

Our kids, as a result of the massive blackguarding, evasion and rejection, have found human access only to one another. The tough passage through adolescence to maturity has become a do-it-yourself job. And that may be an advantage. For if our young people have had to go without grown-up attention, appreciation, amity, communication, and all the rest of what constitutes love, they have also escaped some of the bigotries, narrowness and anti-intellectualism of adult America.

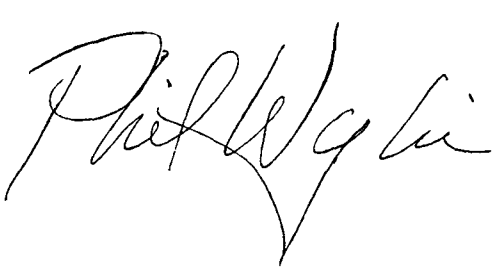
Left to find its own way, American youth has taken and is taking a hard and pensive look at our scene. Seeing the nastiness, the confusion, the hypocrisy, our kids have begun to change directions. Privileged kids are moving into the slums to help kids without any chance. America's kids are venturing into far and often bleak, savage or primitive lands—to help unfortunate people solve their problems. (If you have ever sneered at or casually dismissed the Peace Corps, you have never seen the kids who man it, and you have no concept of its effectiveness.) Other kids are going into the South to crusade for civil rights. Their concern for all the ideals to which we, in general, paid mere lip service is one index of their unprecedented quality. Since their elders won't converse with them, they are now going to force their presence, their ideas and emotions on us, even through clouds of tear gas and gauntlets of nightsticks.

Without question, they are superior people. They have better health, greater life expectancy, and they are taller and far more attractive on the whole than their sires back through time. They have seen much more of their own country than past generations ever did. They are skeptical, critical—as people have to be before they are able to improve anything, themselves included. They read a dozen times as many books as their elders did during their youth. They are infinitely more candid and direct with one another as male and female—an achievement which sets them apart from and far above all prior generations in this nation.

And they are not satisfied with anything—themselves, America, the world, the philosophy that joy comes by acquiring things, the relation of this land with others, race hatreds, school, what's taught there, who teaches . . . anything. And that's splendid. For their elders were mostly satisfied, right? So look where that got everybody!

I'm willing to argue my position with qualified persons—persons, that is, who are old enough to be parents of teen-agers and who, in the past five or six years, have spent at least 24 hours apiece listening to and talking *with*—not to or at—a minimum of two dozen young Americans, 13 to 21, not their own, and with no holds barred and no squelching of young opinion. Such a minimal standard will rule out, I know, most of my readers. There is no other way, however, to get to know the finest people in the world. It is quite an experience. It is reassuring to learn that America will be in better hands than our own. Adults who have the nerve, courage, patience, love and moral honesty to make friends with our kids might find the experience of personal benefit. Some of the fineness of our youth might rub off on them.

And, God knows, many of them could stand improvement.





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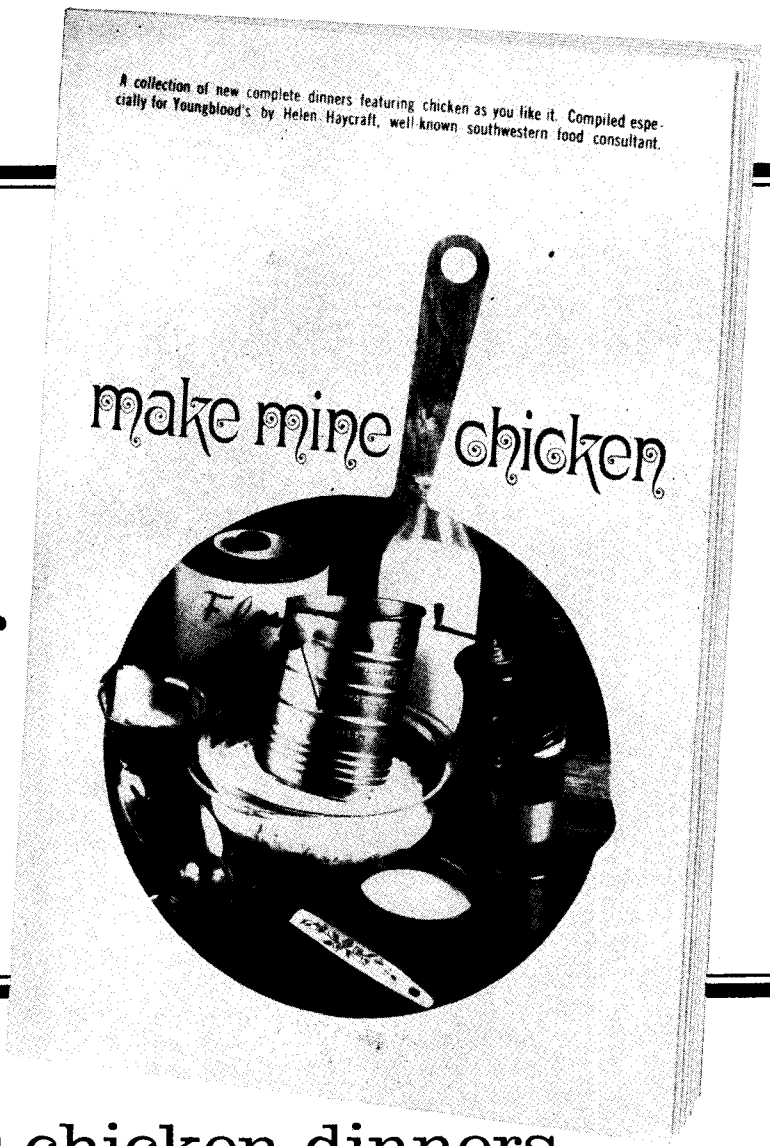
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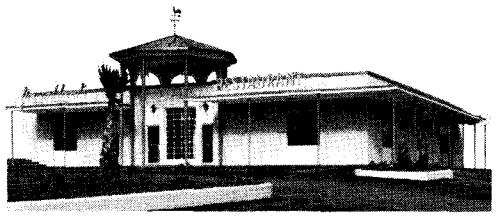

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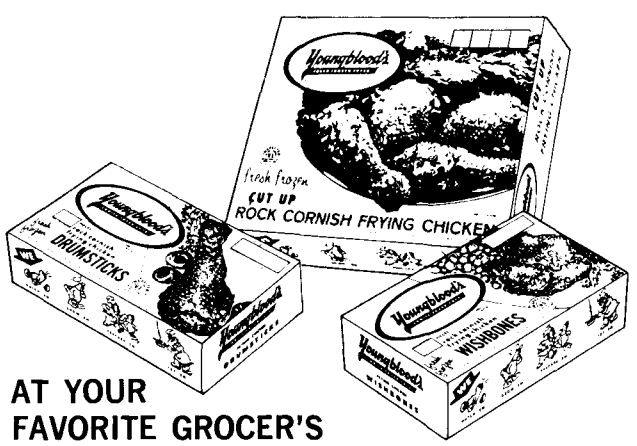


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# WAR'S AWFUL LOGIC

WASHINGTON:

President Johnson's decision to commit large numbers of American troops to battle in Vietnam has changed the whole nature of the ugly little war there. The meaning of the change is suggested by a talk this reporter had last February with one of the ablest American generals in Vietnam. For an open-ended remark the general made, and the way his hand hovered over a map of North Vietnam, seem a lot more significant now than they did then.

The bombing of the North had just started. What effect, the general was asked, might the bombing have? There was at least a chance, the general said, that American air power might be sufficient to persuade the North Vietnamese Communists to halt their infiltration of men and supplies into South Vietnam. Then the Viet Cong would be in really bad trouble, and the South Vietnamese armed forces alone ought to be able to bring the Communists under control, perhaps rather quickly.

There was, of course, also a chance, the general said, that the North Vietnamese would respond to our air attacks by accelerating their infiltration, even sending organized units into the South. In that case, he said, the South Vietnamese forces could not possibly handle the situation alone.

In other words, I asked, American troops would have to be committed to combat? That was a decision for the President, the general said, but it might well be the only alternative to defeat. How and where, I asked, might American combat forces be used?

The general got to his feet and walked over to a big map of both North and South Vietnam on the wall. The answer to that question, he said, depended on the objective. If the objective were simply to hang on and hope for a negotiated settlement—here he made a sweeping gesture with his hand along the coast of South Vietnam—you could create strong points here and there in the South.

Of course, you couldn't win the war that way, he said—a lot of wars had been lost, and very few had been won, by a static defense. If you wanted to *win*—he raised his hand and it hovered over the map, somewhere between the 18th and 19th parallels.

This is where North Vietnam narrows till it looks on the map hardly wider than a piece of string, and where the long tail of Laos between Vietnam and Thailand is also at its narrowest.

For a few seconds the general's hand hovered over the map. Then he let it fall. "If you wanted to *win* this war . . ." he said again. He left the sentence unfinished, returned to his desk, and became briskly uncommunicative.

The general's unfinished sentence is worth recalling now for a simple reason: Wars have an awful, inexorable logic of their own. Suppose the Vietnamese war were like all the wars the United States has fought in the past. Then the objective of the United States would be simply the defeat of the enemy, or the negotiated equivalent of that defeat. .

In that case, the general's hovering gesture over the long tail of North Vietnam would make impeccable military sense. For in that case the unchallenged air and naval superiority of the United States would surely be used, probably in an amphibious operation like the Inchon landing in Korea, to cut off at the source the North's oblique aggression against the South.

General Vo Nguyen Giap, North Vietnam's military commander, is quite aware that this is so. After the President announced his decision to send many more combat troops to Vietnam, Giap issued an immediate warning: "We need to make every preparation to defeat the United States aggressors in case they expand the war to the whole of our country."

President Johnson has no desire to "expand the war." When he announced his decision, the President said: "We do not want an expanding struggle with consequences that no one can perceive." In so saying, the President was deeply, almost desperately, sincere. Yet the inexorable logic of this ugly little war has already twice forced the President to do what he deeply desired *not* to do.

Before he finally decided to bomb North Vietnam, the President repeatedly stressed his desire, indeed his settled intention, *not* to do so—in his own words, not to "go north and drop bombs, try to wipe out supply lines, and . . . escalate the war."

These words, and others like them, were spoken during last year's campaign. But they were not mere campaign oratory—the President had no desire at all to "escalate the war," and for good reason. But by last February it was clear that if the United States did not "go north and drop bombs," the war in the South would soon be lost. So the President in the end did what he very much wanted not to do.

The President has certainly been just as sincere in his often expressed intention (again in his own words) of not "getting tied down in a land war in Asia." But that is precisely what he is now doing—and again because the logic of war has left him no alternative but defeat. What has happened twice already may happen a third time. However much "we do not want an expanding struggle," we may be forced to embark on such a struggle, again to avoid defeat.

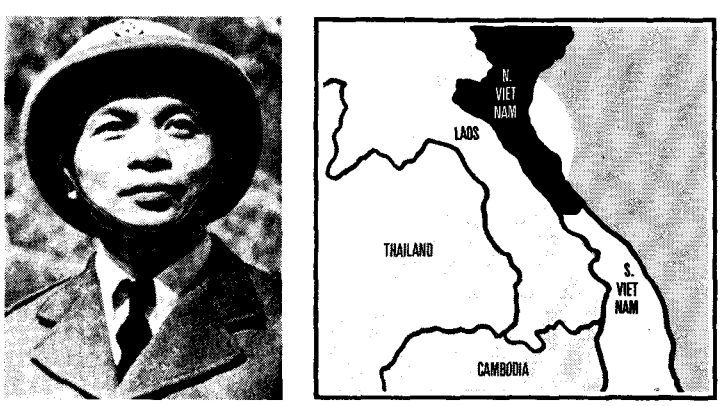
For the war in Vietnam now seems all but certain to become what President Eisenhower, President Kennedy and President Johnson all deeply hoped it would never become—primarily an American war, rather than a war between Vietnamese. President Johnson still hopes that it will not become this kind of war. As this is written, the presidentially approved plans call for American troops to act as a "mobile reserve." while the Vietnamese do most of the fighting.

But how long can the Americans in Vietnam maintain this relatively passive posture? The longer they do so, the more it will look as though the Americans are willing to die to the last Vietnamese. Moreover, the commitment of American combat troops in large numbers is sure in itself to generate new and very powerful emotional, political and military pressures.

The American commanders in the field will certainly want to do what all field commanders always want to do—win their war. As the count of American killed and wounded mounts, as it is tragically sure to do, they will have plenty of highly emotional support back home. If then for a third time it comes to seem to the President that the only way not to lose the war is to fight a larger war, he is likely again to do what he very much wants not to do—"with consequences that no one can perceive."

It is because he himself undoubtedly senses this danger that he has gone very much further to meet the Communist conditions for negotiation than had seemed possible only a few months before. For the only way to escape the awful logic of war is to stop the war. But the war can only be stopped if the North Vietnamese Communists and their backers come to the conclusion that those unperceivable consequences may be even more terrible for their side than for our side.

Stewart Alsop




*North Vietnam's General Giap knows the area where he is highly vulnerable.*



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Another extra is the wide range of flexible annuity contracts Metropolitan can give you. These are particularly valuable if your retirement plans are still uncertain and you need most of your earnings to live on today.

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# MY UNCLE, THE VIOLINIST

*By Allan Sherman*

There are certain people who look like what they are in life—and there are others who don't. My Great-Uncle Max (my grandmother's brother) looked like a violinist. He looked more like a violinist than anybody else in the world. Jascha Heifetz—you pass him in the street, you could mistake him for a certified public accountant or the vice-president of Hart, Schaffner & Marx. But the first time you see my Uncle Max you think, *There goes a violinist.*

He isn't very tall—but he looks tall, if you know what I mean, and in his face are many deep lines, wrinkles that show he's a man who worries about Life, like a real violinist. He has high cheekbones, like an Indian's, and long black hair and long black sideburns and heavy eyebrows, always wrinkled, like he's in Deep Thought. And his head is tilted over to the left side, as a violinist's head should be. From the time he was four years old, Max was given a violin to study and he became the Genius and Hope of the family.

In those days it was the dream of every Russian-Jewish family like ours to have a son who was a violinist—another Elman, another Kreisler. (When I was five, my family even tried unsuccessfully to turn *me* into a violinist.) My Uncle Max had a promising start, but by the age of 20 he wasn't doing so good. He ran around Chicago, playing a *bar mitzvah* here, a wedding there, getting a week's work in a moving-picture theater playing music for the silent movies so they wouldn't be so silent. But he didn't work steady. My grandpa, employed as a presser of women's coats, worked more steadily than Max and made "union wages," as he put it. But there was a mixture of admiration and jealousy on my grandpa's part toward his brother-in-law, and you can't blame him, because my grandma's family all worshiped the Genius.

Nobody in my family ever had any stocks or bonds or securities. Still, when the market crash came they all managed to get wiped out. How, I don't know. All I know is, something happened on Wall Street on Black Thursday which ruined the coat-pressing business on the West Side of Chicago, and from Friday on, for the rest of his life, my grandfather was on relief.

I guess the only business that withstood the crash was the Genius business. Uncle Max came through it beautifully. For him, 1930 was a good year. "You see?" he said one night at dinner. "By music is no crashes. Music is always the same. Music is music." And, having said something really deep, he returned to his noodle soup.

But Grandpa had waited 10 years to say something, and tonight he was going to say it. He took off his gold-rimmed glasses and wiped them with the tip of his necktie. Then, with a bravado we never knew he had, he shouted: "You listen to me, Max. I'm going to tell *you* something!"

He looked around the table to make sure all of us were paying attention. We were. And the next few words he delivered magnificently:

"Maybe you right, Max. Maybe music *is* music. But one thing you forgot in ten years, Max. Just one thing!"

He stood up and leaned across the table toward Uncle Max. Then he said it: "Ladies' coats is also ladies' coats!"

This struck me funny, I don't know why, and I giggled. *All my life I will be sorry I giggled then, because my grandpa looked at me as though I cut him with a knife. It was the only time I ever saw bitterness on his lovely face.*

After that night I never heard him shout again. What kept him alive, I think, was his dream of vengeance, sweet revenge on his brother-in-law, on the Genius of the Violin, on my Uncle Max. My grandfather lived only because he had to prove somehow that music *isn't* music.

And I'm happy to say he *did* prove it.

Shortly after The Night of The Argument, Max stopped coming to our house. Not because he was insulted, but because he had moved to Hollywood.

The whole world was in the middle of the terrible Depression. But not my Uncle Max. All of a sudden he had a Willys-Knight touring car, and a Spanish hacienda with genuine stucco walls, and a palm tree. I wouldn't have believed it, but I saw the snapshots myself. My grandma carried them around in her pocketbook and showed them to people. Mostly to my grandpa.

Another mystery of economics: From nowhere, in the Depression, silent pictures became talking pictures. And for the talkies they needed musicians, quick, and they were paying plenty.

For the talkies they needed a very special kind of musician who not only played but *looked* like a musician. They needed saxophone players who *looked* like saxophone players, and drummers who *looked* like drummers. These were very hard to find.

But when they needed a violinist who *looked* like a violinist—that's when Uncle Max got rich.

Warner Brothers was the company that brought Uncle Max out to Hollywood. After a few pictures at Warners, M-G-M grabbed him for *The Great Waltz* and gave him a close-up. After that there was no stopping him.

You've seen my Uncle Max a thousand times. Sometimes he's in a symphony orchestra, and while the music soars, the camera gets beautiful high-angle shots of Uncle Max fingering and bowing like mad. Or sometimes he's a Gypsy. It's very effective; Uncle Max looks more like a Gypsy than any other violinist in the world. Sometimes you see him in a big-name band. He had three close-ups in *The Glenn Miller Story*. Uncle Max is everywhere.

So my Uncle Max got rich, and the rest of the family stayed poor.

About two years ago, just before my grandfather died, Uncle Max flew to Chicago to see him in the hospital.

Grandpa was resting. There was a television set in the hospital room, and the whole family was sitting around, watching an old Fred Astaire movie.

And there it was—a big full-screen close-up of Uncle Max playing away dreamily. *No kidding—they took the camera off Fred Astaire to show Uncle Max.*

My grandfather stirred. "Max," he said, "you was smart, Max. I got to give you credit."

"What do you mean?" Max said.

"What do I mean?" My grandfather pointed to the television set. "I mean, listen, how beautiful. You was right, Max. Music is music."

Just then the TV music swooped up in a beautiful crescendo, and there was a poignant melody for the strings, and a handsome close-up of Uncle Max, the camera looking across his profile at his long, sensitive fingers on the bow.

Uncle Max walked over to the bed and took my grandfather's hand. "Leon," he said. "Listen to me, Leon. I'm going to tell *you* something."

"OK," my grandfather said. "Tell."

"Leon, this—what I'm going to tell you—I never told nobody. Just you. But you I got to tell, because *you* was right and I was wrong."

"Max, I'm a sick man," my grandfather said. "Don't make me crazy."

Uncle Max continued: "Leon, you was right. Music isn't music. Since I was a baby I studied. All my life I practiced. And now—my music isn't music."

"What are you talking?" asked Grandpa. "Listen to the television."

Uncle Max continued: "Leon—I'm ashamed. Terrible. On the picture is me, yes. But the music—no. The music playing somebody else. I don't even know who."

Grandpa said, "Max—you crazy, something? Can't you see who's playing? *You!*"

"No, Leon! Not me!"

"*Not you?*"

"I'm moving the hands, and I'm shlepping the bow, but I'm not playing."

My grandfather thought for a moment. "So who's playing?" he asked.

"A *record*," said Uncle Max. "A record, from a Victrola. Not me. This they call pre-recording. It's not me."

"In all those pictures you didn't play?" asked my grandfather.

"No."

"Max—twenty-three years you're in Hollywood, *you didn't play yet?*"

"Not even one peep."

My grandfather sighed, and I will never forget his look of bewilderment. "How you like that?" he said to God. "*Music is not music.*" □

© 1965 by Allan Sherman, from the book, A GIFT OF LAUGHTER, to be published by Atheneum in October.



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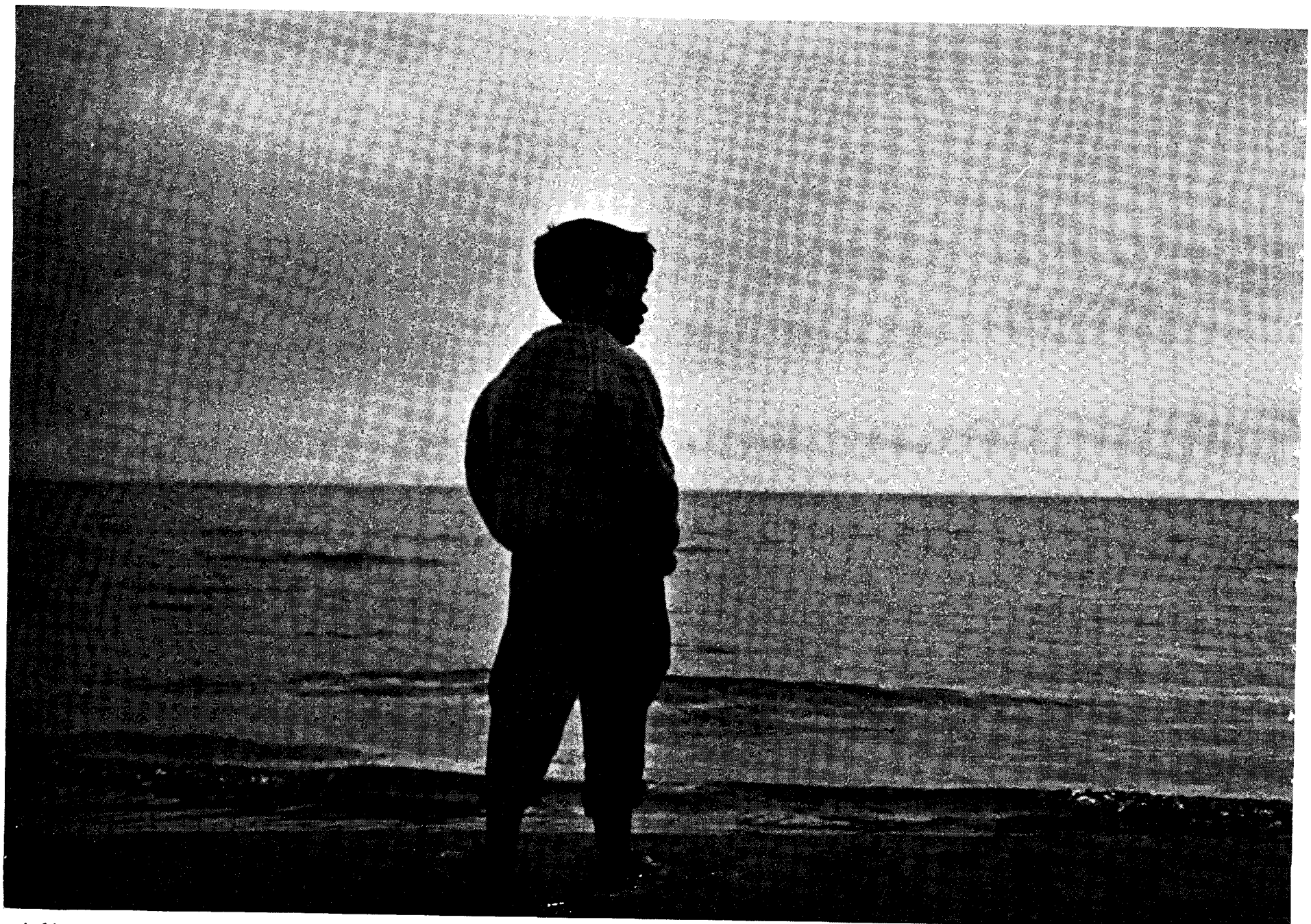

# All this fresh water—yet taps were running dry in suburban Rochester

**Spring brought only apprehension to Monroe County, New York, in 1963. Many families were already without water several hours each day. Summer loomed threateningly ahead.**

**What happened that summer makes thought-provoking reading for anyone who thinks water is his birthright.**

People took water for granted in Monroe County. It was there all around them in natural abundance. No one ever thought of it as a manufactured product.

But manufactured, water is. It must be pumped, piped, treated, stored, then transported to the point of use. And this costs money.

Spend more money? For water? Not likely, when Lake Ontario, one of the largest bodies of fresh water in the world, is at your doorstep.

### Ancient facilities

So the towns surrounding Rochester lived with their ancient facilities, some dating back to 1900. And they had no water problems.

But then came the postwar years, and Rochester exploded. The country towns became bedroom communities, part of a vast metropolitan complex.

In the late '40s the crisis became apparent to a few local leaders. Suburban Rochester was growing fast. It would soon die of thirst if steps weren't taken to provide a modern water system serving the needs of the entire county.

### Complexities were staggering

Nineteen towns surround Rochester in Monroe County. Each controls water distribution to its residents. Each had its own idea of what was or was not needed.

The situation seemed hopeless, until a few county and city leaders proposed the idea of a water authority.

Nonpolitical, and without taxing power, it would be a public-benefit corporation. Operating funds would be derived solely from the sale of water.

### Would the concept work?

The State of New York was willing to find out. In 1950, the legislature passed enabling legislation.

Years slipped by . . . years spent organizing, planning, raising capital, purchasing facilities. When the Monroe County Water Authority finally got into business in 1959, the situation was critical.

An engineering study showed that by 1963—just 4 years!—water demand would rise to 5 million gallons a day more than existing facilities could supply.

### Crash expansion

Immediately, MCWA began a $17 million building program. A new treatment plant. Hundreds of miles of new transmission mains. New booster stations, feeder lines. Construction seldom slowed even during the bitter winter months.

The job was immense. But the goal was met. For, on June 24, 1963, 50 million additional gallons of life-giving water flowed to the parched Rochester suburbs. The foresight of a few men saved thousands from disaster.

Some, however, were not so lucky. They were too far away to be reached by MCWA. For them,



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the water truck became a daily visitor—$7 for 100 gallons of water.

### For just 4¢ a day

Present MCWA facilities and expansion programs under way will assure Monroe County of abundant water past the year 2000, when population is expected to reach 1.3 million—double that of today.

Cost to the average family? An increase of just 4¢ a day.

MCWA's fine planning has meant much to Monroe County. It has enabled suburbanization to continue at a record rate. It has also brought a surge of new industry to the area.

### Unexpected benefits

Twenty years ago, Henrietta was a rural community. Today, it boasts an industrial complex producing millions of dollars' worth of goods each year.

Graflex settled in Pittsford because of abundant water. Perinton was the choice of two new plastics manufacturers. Not to mention Gerber's, the world's largest producer of baby food. Their sprawling new kitchen uses 1½ million gallons of water a day.

Improved water distribution, too, has brought dramatic results in other ways. When MCWA extended its big 20″ feeder mains into Perinton, for instance, fire insurance rates dropped 40%!

### Problem not unusual

Shortages exist in many areas where water is plentiful. People take their supply for granted—ignore it in considering their needs for the future.

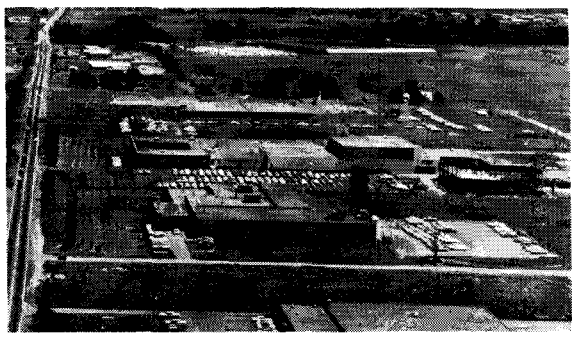
Usually, solutions come only because of the foresight and initiative of a few individuals. People like those in Rochester who recognize the signs and act before it is too late.

### The time to act is now

Answers to water management problems do not come overnight. It takes years before the results of poor water planning can be corrected. Yet by 1980—just 15 years—our nation will need facilities to supply twice the water we use today.

Isn't it time you took a hand?

For more information about our nation's water problems—what needs to be done and how you can get action started in your community—write for the informative booklet, "WATER CRISIS, U.S.A.," Dept. P-45, Caterpillar Tractor Co., Peoria, Illinois, U.S.A.



New water facilities have brought unexpected benefits to suburban Rochester. New industry produces millions of dollars' worth of goods each year.

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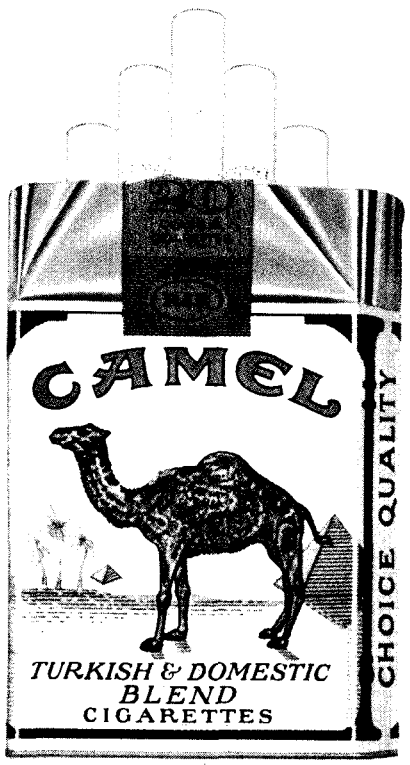


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## Get with Camel—a real cigarette!

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The Saturday Evening
**POST**

# Who is Lyndon Johnson?

*Millions of citizens know the public face of the President of the United States, but behind the official image there exists a man of many and mysterious contradictions.*

By LEWIS H. LAPHAM

The public approach to the President of the United States leads through the lobby in the west wing of the White House. The room is large and high-ceilinged, its walls painted white, the soft leather couches arranged at formal angles. At the south end of the room, at a wide desk placed below a painting of George Washington, sits the Secret Service agent who keeps track of the President's appointments. Behind him, on either side of an American flag, two doors open on a hall that ends in the President's office at the southeast corner of the building.

Through the lobby, therefore, must pass almost everybody who seeks an audience with Mr. Johnson or his immediate advisers. (People whose presence the President wishes kept secret come and go through a maze of side and rear entrances.) The continual procession through the room reflects (in a constrained and formal way) the diversity of the President's concerns. On any given day a missiles expert might be followed by the Cherry Blossom Queen, the Vietnamese Ambassador by the Traffic Boy of the Year, an astronaut by the 20 millionth recipient of Social Security.

Despite these arrivals and departures, the lobby acquires its dominant mood and atmosphere from the representatives of the press. The 30 or 40 reporters who come every day lounge indolently on the sofas,

*Photographs by Ollie Atkins*

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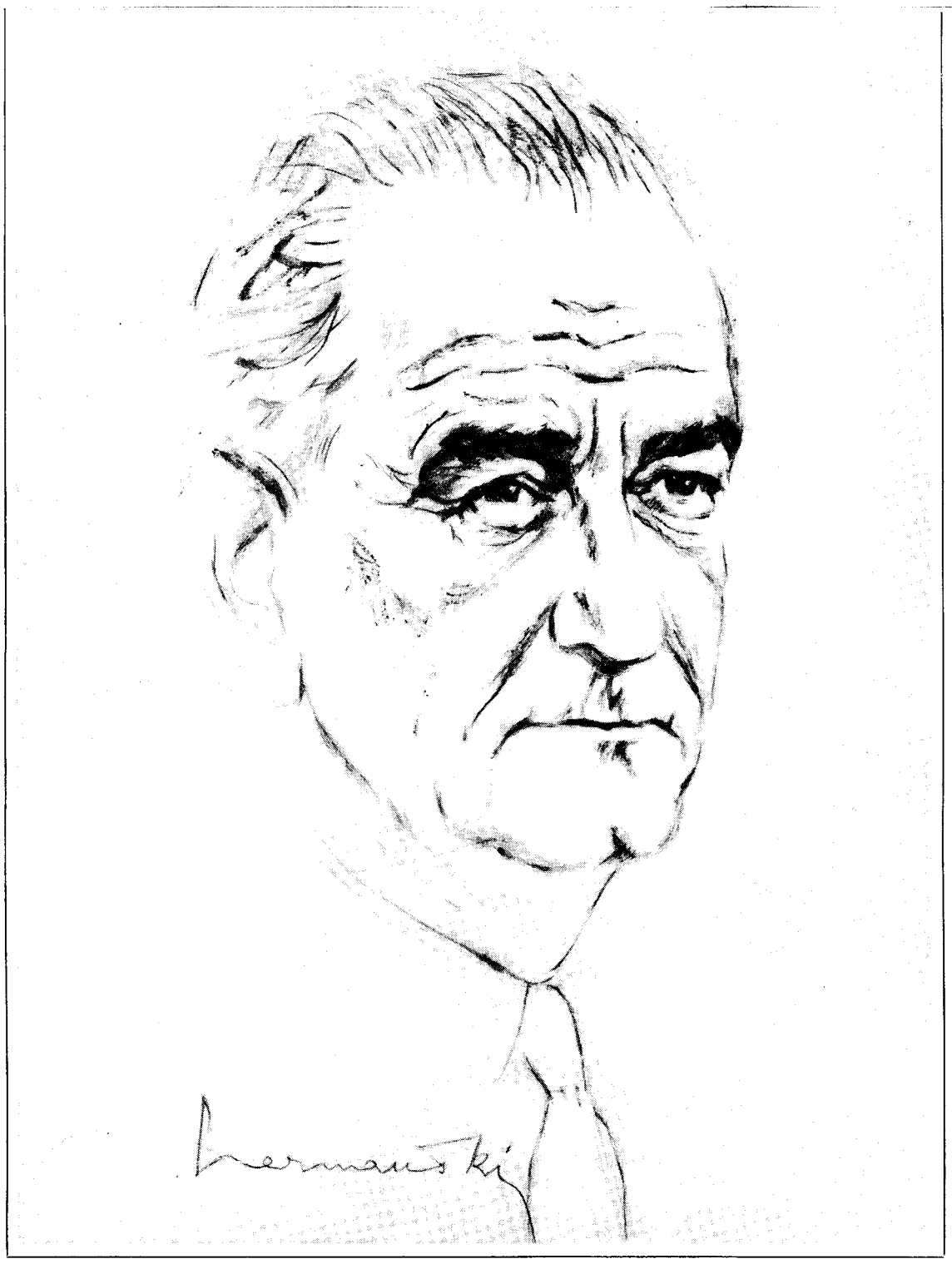

*Original drawing for THE POST by Czermanski.*

waiting for developments. Being both cynical and credulous, they learn to look at the passersby with cold, appraising eyes, willing to doubt any apparently honest motive and yet eagerly welcoming any gossip. Their habitual boredom gives the room the feeling of any other waiting room, whether in a bus terminal or a small-town police station.

The President's press secretary (until last July it was George Reedy; now it is Bill D. Moyers) briefs them twice a day, at 11 A.M. and again at 4 P.M. He summons them into his office (off the north end of the lobby) to read prepared statements and maybe to answer their questions. For the rest, like birds on a flat beach, they follow wherever they are led; to the East Room for a press conference, to Washington's stadium for a baseball game, or to Texas for the weekend.

It is among these reporters that the trouble with images begins. They make the trouble indirectly, by raising private objections to the ceremonial image of President Johnson displayed in the national press. The ceremonial image is, of course, familiar to everybody; the public man on the television screen, who, staring straight into the camera, speaks in a slow, flat drawl, his meaning obscured by the monotonous rhythms of government language. This public man is without personality, a figure perceived in a flat dimension, like a painting on the wall of a state legislature.

But, whispering among themselves in the west lobby, the reporters speak of another Lyndon Johnson, a violent man of sudden moods who, with the sly craft of an old magician, can change himself into many forms. Their talk, transformed into vivid rumors, and much magnified by distance and fanciful repetition, invests the presence of Mr. Johnson with an aura of mystery. The mystery carries across the country in tales told by travelers from Washington and Texas.

It was with the hope of seeing into this mystery that I attached myself last spring to the White House press corps. Within an hour of presenting my credentials I went with the regular reporters on what was to be the first of many expeditions.

At about noon a blond girl, one of Reedy's secretaries, passed through the lobby calling for the press in a high and piping voice. "Reporters," she said, "hey, reporters. . . . OK, reporters . . . we're all going over to see the ambassador now. . . ."

Everybody followed her out the door and around to the north portico of the White House proper. The north portico is the entrance most often seen on postcards, and a crowd of tourists, in Washington for the cherry blossoms, stood staring at it through the iron fence on Pennsylvania Avenue.

We waited under a chandelier in the entrance hall while the girl explained to a Secret Service agent that we had been summoned to watch the President receive the credentials of Sir Patrick Dean, the newly appointed British ambassador to the United States. Thus cleared onto the premises, we followed the girl up a flight of stairs, past a Negro waiter carrying a tray of coffee, and out onto the Truman Balcony on the south portico. The ambassador had already left.

President Johnson, however, received everybody with broad winks and smiles. He stood with his back to the view (the balcony overlooks the Washington and Jefferson memorials), his hands thrust deep into his pockets, his weight solidly distributed on both feet. He was taller and heavier than I had expected, his massive bulk seeming to threaten the smaller men standing next to him. Overwhelmed by the glamour and majesty of his office, I could see at first only the familiar image I had seen in a thousand photographs: the same plain and homely face, the big ears, the heavy jowls and the thinning hair slicked back with oil. Only later did I manage to notice the lesser details: the pants of his silk suit drooping over his shoes; the expensive, gold watch that showed the day of the month, and the narrowed eyes that missed nothing and never smiled, not even when he told a joke.

The President seemed in a confident and expansive humor. The previous weekend he had signed his education bill into law at his old schoolhouse in Texas; the Congress had passed his poverty bill; the Dominican crisis had not yet erupted; and at least one local columnist had compared him to Shakespeare's Caesar, bestriding the narrow world like a colossus. A reporter bold enough to take advantage of the President's mood facetiously asked his pardon for an unflattering article he had written the week before. "Am I forgiven, Mr. President?" the reporter asked.

"We all make mistakes," President Johnson said, equally facetious and yet equally serious.

At this point it occurred to Mr. Johnson that he had neglected to pose with Ambassador Dean. He communicated his wish to rectify the oversight, and a press secretary leaned over the balcony to shout at somebody arranging the British ambassador's departure in a limousine.

*Having signed a Great Society proposal into law, Mr. Johnson gleefully flings an extra pen into crowd at the Rose Garden.*



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# The narrowed eyes missed nothing and never smiled, not even when he joked.

"Hey, Sam," he called out, ". . . Sam, is that the ambassador leaving? Get him back up here, Sam."

While waiting for the ambassador to reemerge from the lower floors, the President spread his arms across the shoulders of the three reporters nearest to him and invited the photographers to take pictures; I subsequently learned that this is one of his ways of rewarding people he thinks deserving of special notice. The ambassador returned and posed for photographs with polite expressions of diplomatic courtesy, and we were dismissed.

Later in the afternoon the blond girl returned to the lobby, calling for the reporters to follow her over to the north portico for a reception in honor of the President's education bill.

In the entrance hall the United States Marine Band played light classical music, like the music heard on Sunday afternoons in a park. Young men wearing dress uniforms and white gloves directed the 300 or 400 guests across the marble and parquet floors. The list of names indicated an appropriate consensus: school administrators from the Middle West, rabbis from New York City, teachers, writers on education, the politicians who had supported the bill, delegates from community organizations in California, Maine and Louisiana.

Before taking their places in the East Room these people filed through a receiving line in the adjacent Green Room, each of them shaking hands with the President. Mr. Johnson took the opportunity to practice the art of the political nuance, discriminating among the people in terms of the firmness or length of a handshake or the warmth of a smile. To some he told a joke or recalled a mutual friend; to others he said nothing at all.

After they had gone through the line, the people sat wherever they could among the banquet chairs arranged in rows under the crystal chandeliers. The presidential seal and rostrum (both of which travel with him wherever he goes) had been placed in front of a brocade tapestry in the center of the east wall. The presidential flag stood to his left, the American flag to his right. Further to Mr. Johnson's left, mounted on wooden platforms, five movie and television cameras and five tape-recording machines also had been set in place.

A few minutes before the President's entrance, Jack Valenti and Marvin Watson, both special assistants to Mr. Johnson, hurried into the room to make sure that everything was in order. They took particular care with the TelePrompTer in front of the podium, a device that enables the President to read a text without glasses. He is concerned about his appearance and prefers to be photographed without his glasses, from the left side.

During the next two months, I developed the habit of watching for Watson and Valenti, the presence of one or the other of whom usually foretold the President's arrival in even the most unexpected places. Watson, a plump and affable man, the President's appointments secretary, always carried a manila folder. He provided an odd contrast to Valenti, who is small and swarthy.

When Mr. Johnson at last entered the room, everybody stood and applauded, the customary procedure upon a President's entrance. He walked

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# He prefers to be photographed without his glasses and from the left side.

through the crowd with a heavy and shambling stride, winking and nodding at the people he recognized. At the rostrum he leaned carelessly on his right elbow, as if leaning on a fence rail. He smiled benignly at the ceremonial tableau.

The occasion obviously pleased him. He had accomplished a difficult thing, and nobody, perhaps not even his enemies, could criticize him very seriously for an education bill. The stage had been properly set, and there remained nothing for him to do but step out from the wings and lead the applause. "I have longed to see this day come," the President said, "and now it is here, and I'm gonna enjoy it, and I'm gonna celebrate it."

Almost like a boy sheepishly proud of catching the biggest trout that anybody in his town ever saw, the President then went on to deliver a long and rhetorical speech to people who needed no convincing. He spoke in an easy drawl, jingling the coins in his pants pocket and occasionally, for emphasis, slapping his hand on the rostrum. Beginning with one of his favorite themes, he described how the Congress had tried for many years to pass an education bill, always without success. "We failed because we talked instead of doin'," he said. "We spoke instead of actin'."

Throughout the speech he presented himself as the humble and industrious servant of the republic. "I'll never do anythin' in my entire life," he said at one point, "now or in the future, that excites me more, or benefits the nation I serve more, or makes the land and all of its people better and wiser and stronger."

This I gradually came to recognize as the image of himself that Mr. Johnson prefers above all others, that of the man who gets the job done. Whenever harried by what he considered nagging criticism he would fall back on statistics, citing the number of bills passed in Congress, the amounts of money appropriated for poverty or education, the exact percentages of his rating in the opinion polls.

The facts of his undoubted accomplishments seemed to support this image, but, so the other reporters explained, it was only one image among many. The most contradictory one, they said, could be seen in Texas, where, removed from the formal restraints of Washington, the President felt free to behave as he pleased. In Texas the man behind the masks supposedly revealed himself.

Two days after the ceremony in the East Room, on Thursday, April 15, I therefore went with the White House press corps to Texas for the Easter weekend. The reporters preceded the President to Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and waited in a drizzling rain for his arrival by helicopter from the south lawn of the White House.

The helicopter landed within 40 yards of Air Force One, the Boeing 707 reserved for the President. Mr. Johnson and his entourage, all of them leaning against the gusts of wind, hurried to the plane between two rows of enlisted men standing at attention. As soon as the stairs dropped away behind them, the plane moved onto the runway.

The plane chartered for the press left an hour later. The reporters were thankful that the President had not played his customary game of

*President Johnson, whether on a jaunt around the White House grounds or traveling through the countryside, has an insatiable urge to mix with his fellow citizens. A touch from the President, a politician in the old style, bears the LBJ brand of magic.*



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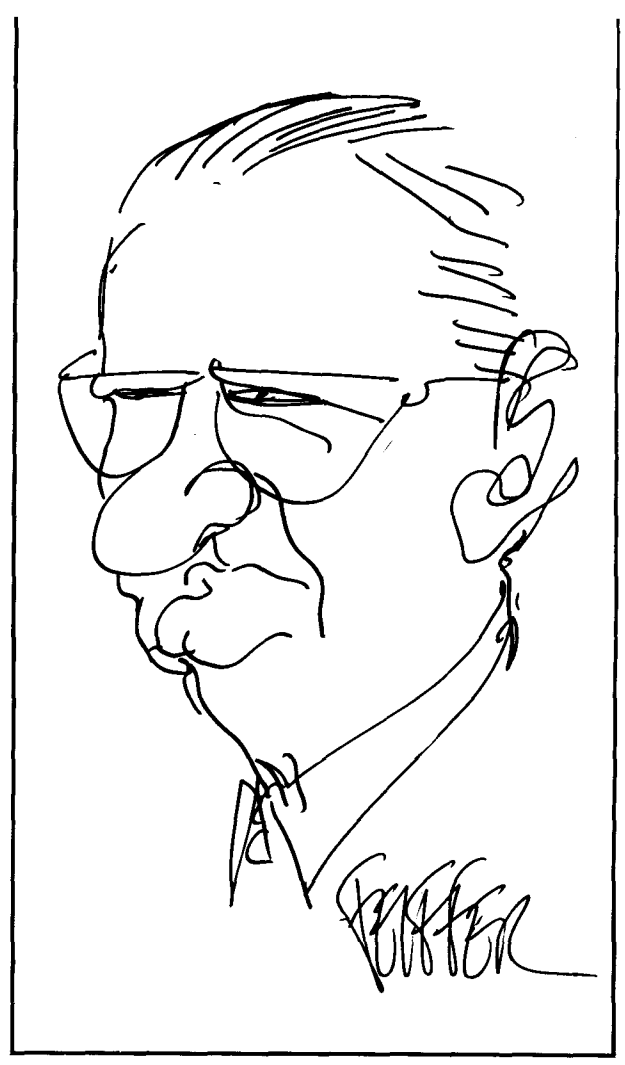

*Cartoonists see L.B.J. in many ways. Drawing for THE POST by Jules Feiffer.*

uncertain departure. Usually, so they said, Mr. Johnson delays confirming his weekend plans until a few hours before he leaves. For two or three days beforehand, however, his press secretary hints, off the record, that a departure is imminent. Thus, beginning on Wednesday, the reporters must come to the White House in the morning with their baggage, not knowing when, or even if, they will go to Texas that same afternoon. For the Easter weekend, however, the President had given them 24 hours' definite notice.

At Bergstrom Air Force Base, near Austin, the rising moon and setting sun balanced on the horizon at opposite ends of the field, like balls on a billiard table. The President had long since gone by helicopter to his ranch 65 miles west of town.

The next morning George Reedy held a briefing in the Maximilian Room on the second floor of the Driskill Hotel in Austin. The room is so named in honor of the gilded mirrors, reputed to have belonged to the emperor of Mexico. The maroon wallpaper and the white, fluted columns suggest the fake opulence of a saloon in a cheap western movie.

At the briefing Reedy announced the promotion of a few generals, but beyond that he said nothing of interest. Any questions of foreign or domestic policy he clumsily but stubbornly evaded, suffering the gibes of the reporters and dully repeating what he had already said, in the manner of a schoolboy reciting a lesson.

On Saturday morning Reedy announced the President's wish to make a statement at noon. Military buses, he said, would leave for the ranch within half an hour.

Across the bleak and gentle hills west of Austin the cedar and pecan trees had begun to show the first green of the early Texas spring. Hawks drifted in the pale sky; the signs on the wide road advertised "minnows in plastic bags" and warned against deer roaming at night. The towns, nothing more than a few frame buildings at a crossroads, had names like Oak Hill and Dripping Springs.

About a mile beyond a crude sign that read STONEWALL, TEXAS—HOME (*continued on page 65*)

*Like bees buzzing around a hive, the members of the Washington press corps swarm around the President as he ambles about on the south lawn of the White House. Mr. Johnson has spent as much as two hours on one of these informal, off-the-record walks.*



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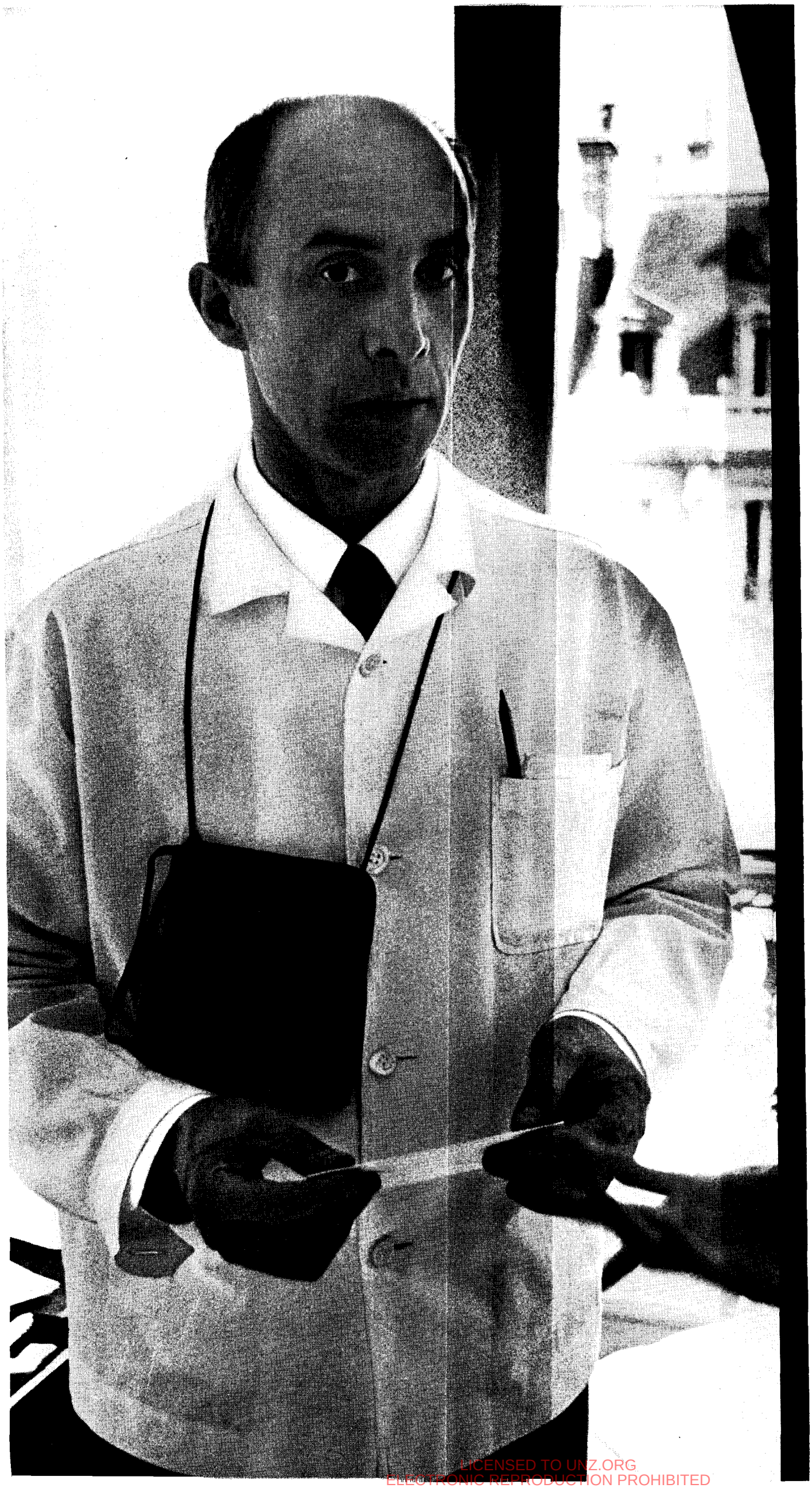

*Equipped with a large pincushion and clad in a white jacket he designed himself, André Courrèges blends with white walls of his Paris salon.*

# ALL

In a dogged attempt to keep up with things, I regularly read the *National Geographic* from cover to cover, but I somehow always seem to be the last person to learn about any new fad, fashion or craze. For example, I didn't find out about the Twist until everyone else was already doing the Monkey; I thought until a month ago that Rudi Gernreich was an outfielder for the Chicago Cubs; and I'm still not quite sure who Soupy Sales is.

Furthermore, I have the strange power, picked up years ago in the Orient, to be entirely oblivious of a new craze or fashion when it's staring me literally smack in the face. One Saturday evening last month, for instance, my wife Karen and I trailed along with some friends to a cocktail party given by a couple called Burt and Betty Bursby. Now I've always quietly prided myself on having "a way with children," and I charmingly spent most of the evening chatting with a delightful little girl who was wearing white boots and an extremely short white dress and whom I took to be the Bursbys' eight- or nine-year-old daughter. "Say, the Bursbys have certainly got themselves a cute kid there," I remarked to Karen when we got home from the party. "And so *bright* for her age."

"Oh, for *goodness'* sake," said Karen, "that wasn't a kid, that was Betty Bursby you were talking to."

"Betty Bursby?" I asked, confused. "Well, how come she was dressed like the Girl of the Limberlost?"

"Oh, *hon*estly, don't you know *any*thing?" said Karen. "That was the Little-Girl Look—by Courrèges, the dress designer. It's the swinging new In fashion—*every*body knows that."

"Oh," I retorted, slinking off to bed. Am I forever to be an Out *schlump?* I

*Photographs by Greene-Eula*

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# WHERE DID THE WOMEN GO?

If they follow the lead of couturier André Courrèges, they have turned into little girls. If the fashion trend continues, they may toddle right on back to infancy.

*By Thomas Meehan*

*White eye-slit sunglasses, a trademark of the "look."*

*Booted models wearing Courrèges coats on Champs-Élysées have close to ideal figures for the "Little-Girl Look"—which is to say, the long-waisted, skinny-legged, uncurved figures commonly associated with twelve-year-old girls.*



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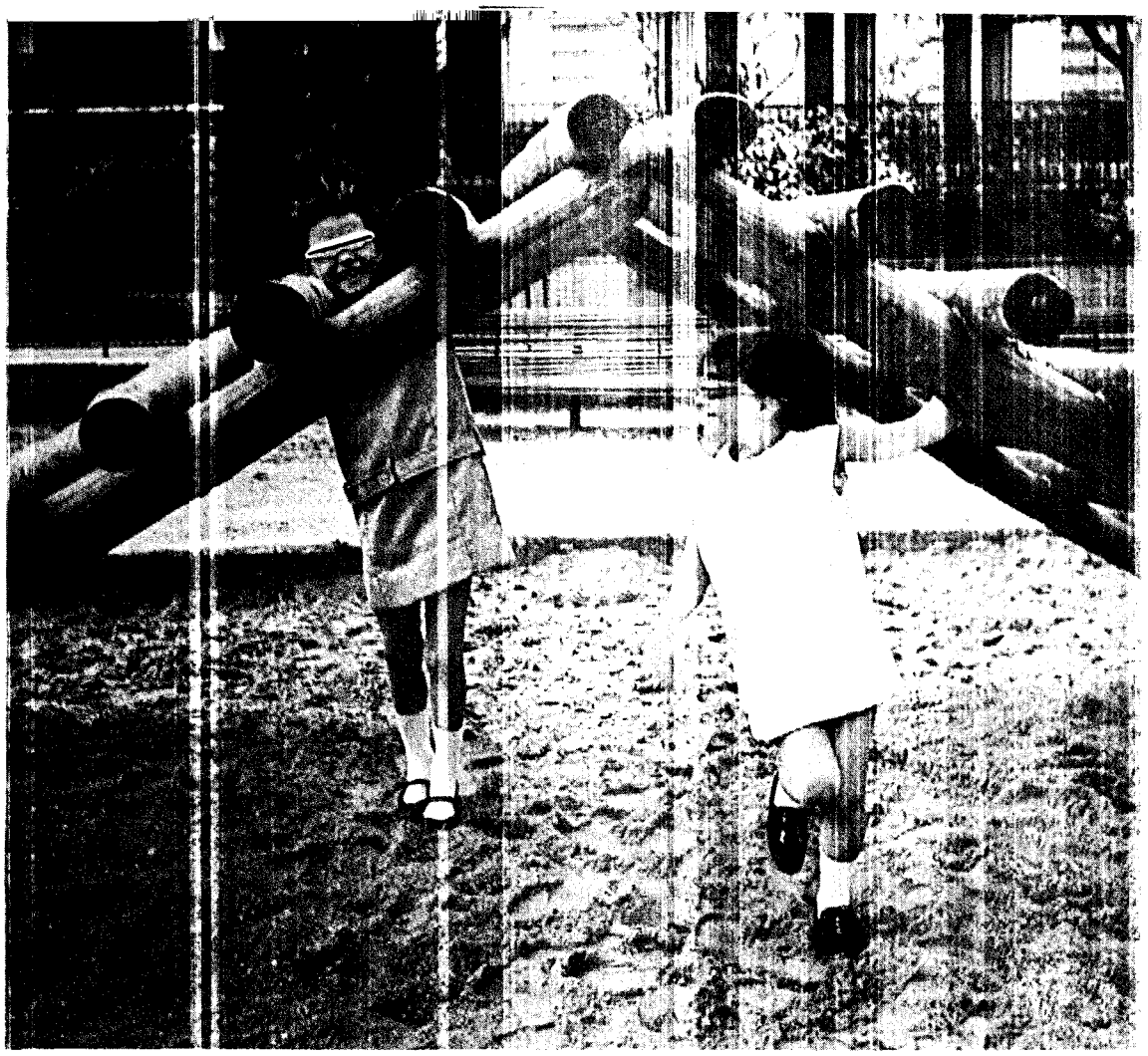


asked myself, as I lay awake that night, tossing and turning for nearly 37 seconds. No, I answered myself emphatically, dropping off to sleep like a rock, and the next morning I arose determined to find out everything I could about Courrèges and the Little-Girl Look. For once, I promised myself, I was going to be *au courant* in depth.

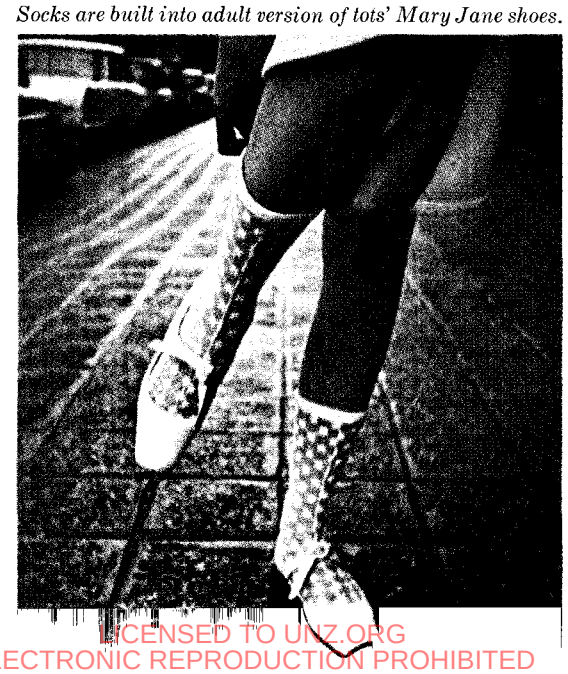
The first fact I discovered is that, of all things, this Courrèges turns out to be a man, not a woman—a 42-year-old Frenchman named André Courrèges who lives alone in a Paris walk-up apartment near the *Bois de Boulogne* and designs dresses that look as though they were meant for Shirley Temple (circa 1936) but are instead meant for women like Romy Schneider, Baby Jane Holzer, and the Duchess of Windsor. According to my basic research source, a New York fashion editor whom I treated to a staggeringly expensive lunch at The Four Seasons in order to pump her about Courrèges, the chap is somewhat obsessed with white. His apartment is decorated almost entirely in white, his salon and workshop are both done in white, and he himself works in a white jacket, like a dentist or a Good Humor man. And, I learned, practically all of the clothes he designs are white, although his short-short dresses, schoolgirl tie-under-the-chin hats with turned-back rims, and slim, slit-at-the-ankle slacks are sometimes edged or striped with sharply contrasting reds, blues or yellows, presumably so that the aging Little Girl wearing them can be made out in a snowstorm or spotted when she revisits the Courrèges salon for a second round of $500 (and up) frocks.

"Courrèges believes that little girls are actually the last word in chic," my fashion-editor friend explained to me over her second pre-luncheon frozen daiquiri, "and he thinks grown-up women should dress like little girls—in stark, simply designed, four-inches-above-the-knee skirts which, he dictates, must be worn with flat-heeled, calf-high white boots. Courrèges is against bras, corsets, girdles and high heels, which he says are old-fashioned and restricting. He claims that his clothes liberate the modern woman so that she can live in the Space Age with a free spirit."

Briskly ordering the stuffed pheasant with wild rice, she then went on to tell me something about Courrèges's background. He was born, she said, in Pau, in the Basque country of the French Pyrenees, the son of a butler. For obscure reasons, M. Courrèges Sr. wanted his son to become an engineer. Young Courrèges, who himself wanted to be a painter, bowed to the will of his father, trekked off to engineering school, became an engineer and, indeed, at the age of 28 found himself the chief of the engineering-research division of a large French manufacturing company. Loathing every minute of it, he one day abruptly threw over his engineering career and went to work "handling fabrics" for a Parisian dress designer named Balenciaga, whoever *she* is, at a cool $25 a month. Courrèges stayed with Balenciaga for 10 years, moving up life's ladder from handling fabrics to designing dresses. Then, four years ago, he left to found his own fashion house, starting with a mere 10 assistants and working up to the point where he now has 60 employees.

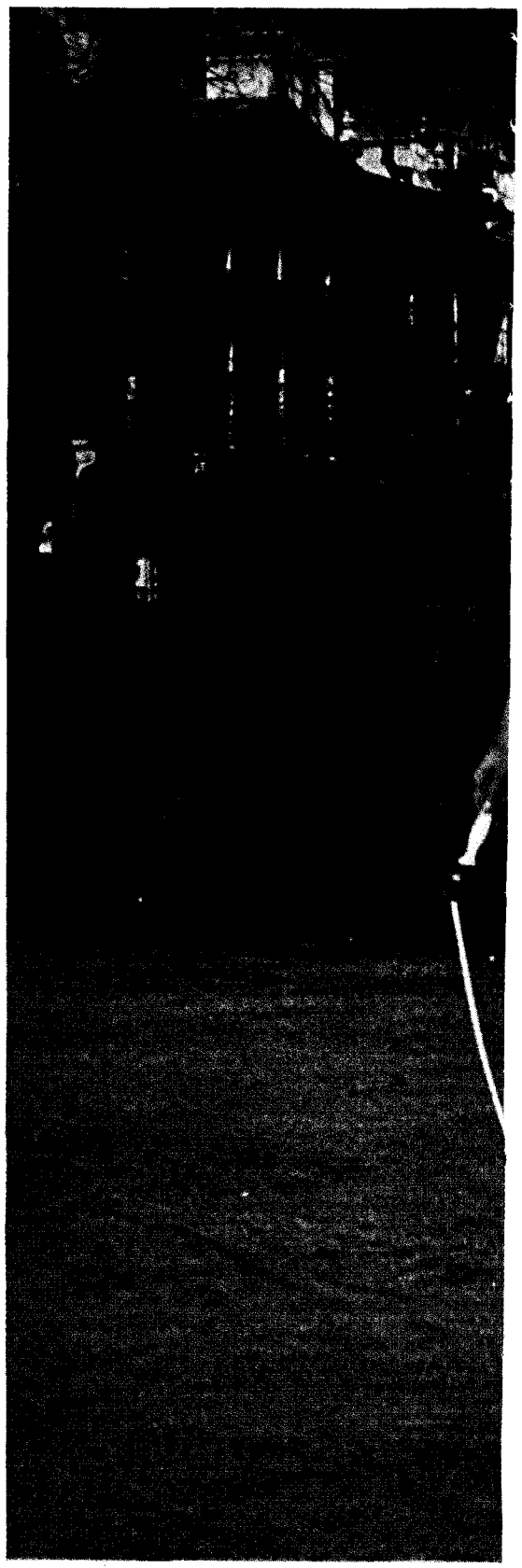
No one seems to know precisely when Courrèges decided that the Duchess of Windsor and her set should be dressed like Baby Snooks, but his clothes last year began to take on a curiously kindergartenish look. This past February, when he introduced his 1965 collection, the Little-Girl Look burst full-blown upon the Parisian fashion scene, astonishing and inexplicably delighting everyone there. The international set quickly agreed that it was the most exciting thing that had

*Socks are built into adult version of tots' Mary Jane shoes.*



## The 'look' should spread this fall, like the Black Death.

*The trend comes full circle with the Little-Girl Look for real little girls. The copies shown here were made for Saks Fifth Avenue.*





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happened to fashion in something like three or four years. Naturally, most of America's best-dressed women, including Jacqueline Kennedy, Lady Bird Johnson and Charlotte and Ann Ford, have already rushed to buy *their* Courrèges dresses. But the full force of the Courrèges influence on American fashion won't be felt until early October, when the Little-Girl Look is expected to spread out from New York and environs to sweep the country like the Black Death.

My informant told me, as she ordered a bottle of Montrachet '59 to go with her pheasant, that Courreges himself is a shy, slight, balding chap who has few close friends and few interests outside his work. His one relaxation is playing *pelota*, a Basque game which, significantly enough, involves bouncing a ball against a whitewashed wall.

Having almost singlehandedly created a full-scale fashion revolution Courrèges surprised everyone by not showing a new collection this summer. He is now rumored to be about to step down from the giddy heights of *haute couture* to bring out, in association with a U.S. manufacturer, a line of ready-to-wear clothes, a move that will probably lose him the Duchess of Windsor's business but should keep him in *pelota* balls for the rest of his life.

Of course, a Courrèges running up frocks for a handful of affluent American women, even a Courrèges with a manufacturer helping him, isn't by himself a major headache to American men. It's just that, as my friend explained over her *mousse au chocolat*, many copies of Courrèges dresses are being sold here, and the Little-Girl Look has had a considerable influence on all American ready-to-wear-clothes designers. American manufacturers are rapidly turning out Courrèges-type dresses which can be bought for around a hundred dollars, which is substantially cheaper than the $500 or so charged for a Courrèges original and the $800 that some expensive stores are charging for made-to-order copies of Courrèges designs. Garment makers here are also producing Courrèges-type bridal gowns, slips, bathing suits and country-resort wear, and, as a matter of startling fact, are now bringing out Courrèges-

*Cult of youth admits no limits, up to and including toddlers' clothes. Here, in Paris's Parc Monceau, two schoolchildren in classic jumper suits frolic with their Courrèges mothers, who are dressed in $530 jumper suits and slit-toed leather boots. Above-the-knee skirts make rope-skipping easy for grown-ups young enough to manage it.*



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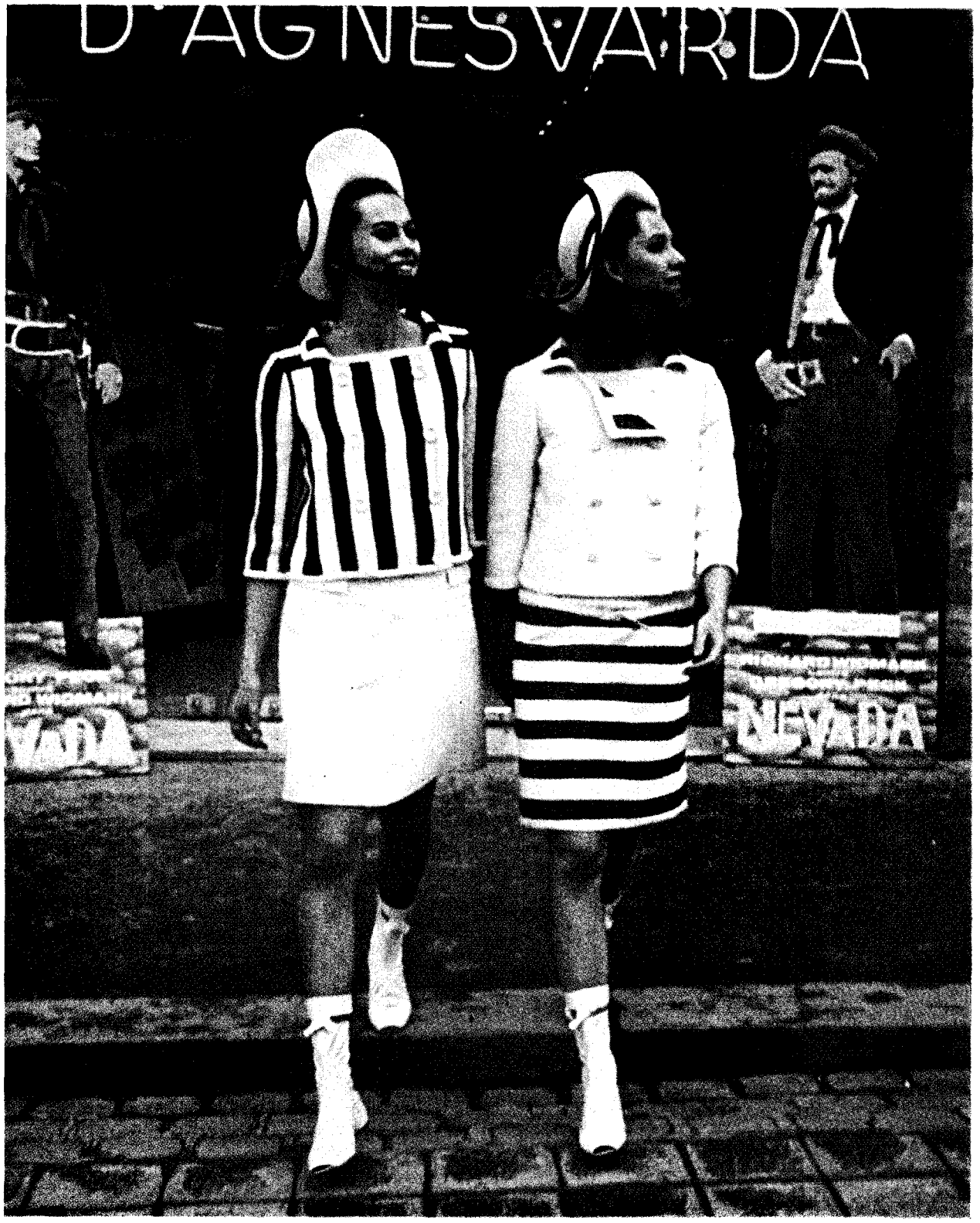


*Child-women leave an adult Western, wearing bold-striped suits and banded hats tied under chins (a Courrèges cachet). Clothes are made to be worn without girdle or bra, which ideal Courrèges figure doesn't need anyway.*

A very In lady was wed in a copy of her christening dress.

type clothes for little girls, which is by way of bewilderingly bringing everything full circle.

Courrèges has also had an almost traumatic influence on a number of individual American women, some of whom, my friend reported, are prowling into the children's sections of New York department stores, ostensibly in search of dresses for their oversized eight-year-old daughters but actually looking for dresses for themselves. In order to fit herself into a dress designed for an eight-year-old, the American woman must slim herself down to Manuel Ycaza weight, and thus, as a corollary to the Little-Girl Look, the fashion-model stick figure is also very much in vogue. Indeed, even in the grown-up-girls' departments, it's now considered hopelessly gauche to ask for a size 12; size 10 is just barely OK, and, my friend told me, all of the really In women are squeezing themselves into sizes 8 and smaller. So the Little-Girl-Look clothes leave almost no room for bosoms, bottoms, etc., and are distinctly un-feminine from the point of view of the American man who is being forced into the role of a nervous Humbert Humbert squiring fortyish Lolitas. Courrèges himself, however, my friend reported, claims that his clothes are *not* unfeminine. "Courrèges says that wearing his clothes is merely a new, contemporary way of being feminine," she explained.

At this point, there is absolutely no stopping the Little-Girl Look, because buyers from every major American store have already purchased enormous stocks of Courrèges-type clothes for the fall. "The look is part of the current cult for youth, the almost desperate attempt of the American woman to look younger than she really is," said my friend, as we left The Four Seasons, parting on the corner of Park Avenue and East 52nd Street. "It isn't a very dignified trend, but I'm afraid it's here to stay for a while."

Pondering these rather ominous words, I strolled back to my office, trying to figure out just what the trend to the Little-Girl Look might mean to contemporary western civilization. Was Oswald Spengler gloating in his grave, as the West was at last going into total Decline? Or, on the other hand, did the craze for Courrèges merely indicate that it's easier to Frug in a short-short dress? Or perhaps the American woman was guilty of a mass Freudian regression to childhood, cravenly chickening out in the face of the anxieties of the Atomic Age. All in all, however, I finally decided that both Oswald Spengler and the Frug were irrelevant to the issue, while, on the regression question, I found the American woman "Not Guilty"—by reason of Temporary Insanity. Every couple of years, it seems, the ladies must go almost psychotically overboard for some entirely absurd new fashion, and the American man must simply endure it as patiently as possible. This, too, I told myself hopefully, like the Sack Dress, the Bouffant Look, and the Haystack Hairdo, shall pass.

In additional researches into Courrèges, however, I stumbled upon some further disconcerting fashion news. Whereas Courrèges dresses women to look more or less like eight-year-old girls, there is now, I discovered, a trend toward an even younger look. For example, Rudi Gernreich (the ex-Cub) has recently come out with a frilly frock for the adult American woman that falls in a straight line from a smock-top and is an almost exact copy of a three-year-old's first nursery-school dress. Furthermore, the Gernreich dress is designed to be worn with white cotton anklets and black patent-leather Mary Jane shoes. This dress is one of several manifestations, I found, of something that is now known in the fashion world as the Kiddo Look, which, no kidding, is a kind of Junior Division of the Little-Girl Look. The Kiddo Look has also been taken up by Beth and Herbert Levine, two of America's best-known shoe designers, who now have shoes for grown-up women that resemble a kiddy's birthday-party slippers, with round toes and baby heels.

Finally, to pass on the last gasp of my research, I learned that Yves Saint Laurent has just announced that his new fall-winter collection represents the "Baby Girl Look." I also noted the other day in a New York newspaper society-page column that one of Manhattan's brightest young fashion-magazine editors was recently married in a wedding gown that was an exact copy of her christening dress. When I read this bit of news, I suddenly had a chilling vision of yet another female fashion craze, the Pablum Look, under the spell of which, a few months from now, hordes of American women will be toddling into cocktail parties, supermarkets, and PTA meetings in rompers, pink sunbonnets and baby booties. Once I had had this vision, I decided the hell with being *au courant,* and went back to the *National Geographic.* □

*Kite-flying outfits at the Eiffel Tower include $500 slack suits and $100 boots. Courrèges maintains that his styles are "a contemporary way of being feminine."*



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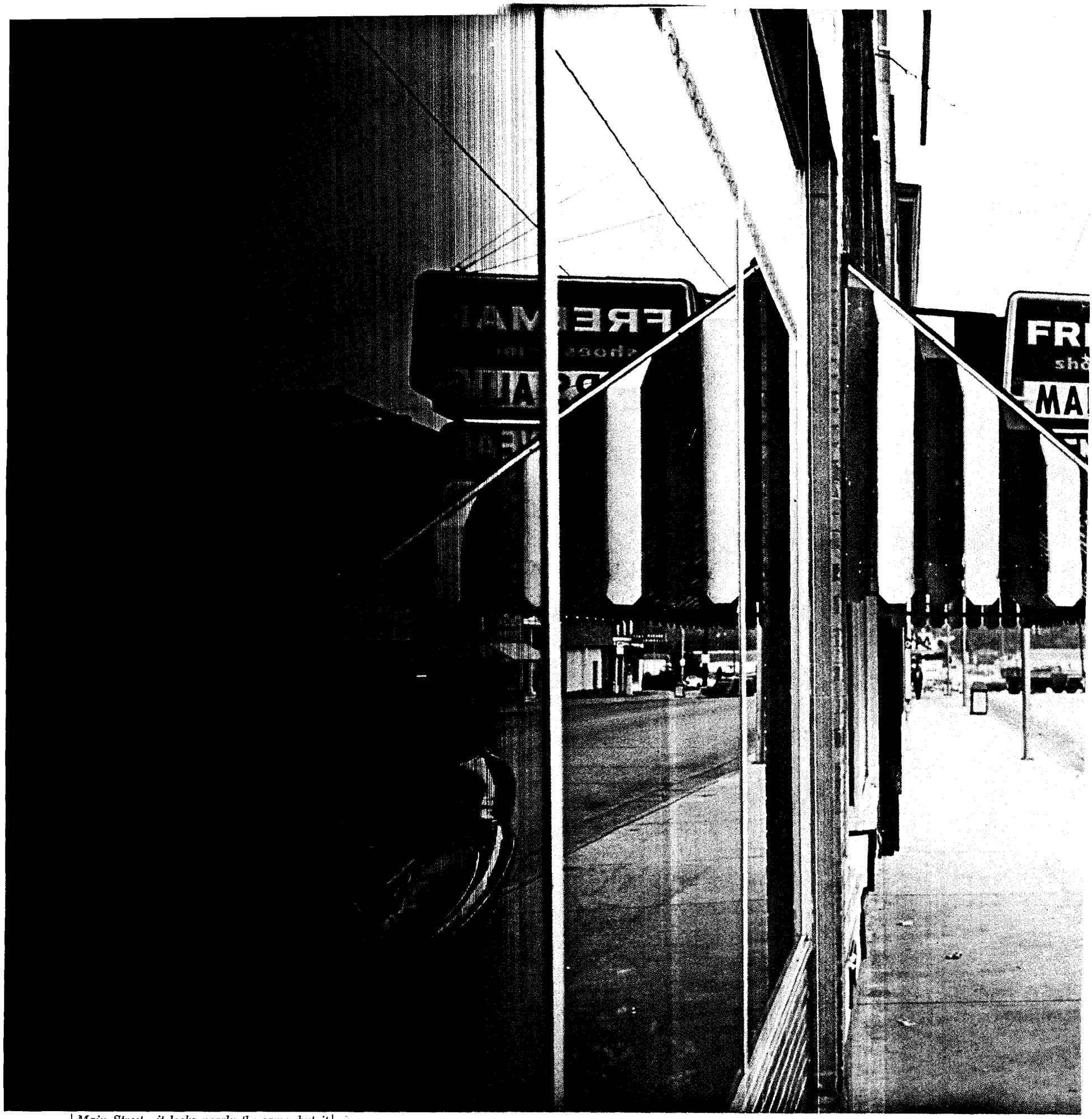

*Main Street—it looks nearly the same, but it isn't. One of Love's memories is of blacksmith Frank Fuller and his tuba. Arthur Kleinpell, a family friend, obliges by oomphing a few notes.*

## The situation in FLUSHING:

# HOMETOWN USA

*There were few cars then and no refrigerators or TV sets, and drinking water came from an outside pump. After 40 years a visitor finds nearly everything changed—except the warm memories of his boyhood in a small Michigan town.*

**By EDMUND G. LOVE**



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People go back to visit their old hometowns for all kinds of different reasons, I suppose. When I went back to Flushing, Mich., not long ago, it was mainly to see the railroad. Someone had suggested that I make the entire trip from New York by train, but you can't get to Flushing by train anymore. I had to go to Flint and borrow a car. It took me just eight minutes to reach the center of the village after I got behind the wheel. In 1918, when the Hart Milling and Power Company burned to the ground, Flushing called on the city of Flint for assistance. Two motorized pumpers and an aerial ladder truck were dispatched, and they traveled exactly the same route I did. With sirens blowing and firemen hanging on for dear life, it took the pumpers 45 minutes to make the trip, bouncing along from hole to hole and rut to rut on a narrow gravel road. The ladder truck never did finish the trip. It broke down by my Uncle Albert Staple's barn with five miles still to go. Just three years *after* the fire at Hart's Mill, my father shocked the village of Flushing by speeding over the same route in an amazing 36 minutes. All the people in town were absolutely sure the record would stand forever.

© 1965 by Edmund G. Love. From the forthcoming book "The Situation in Flushing," to be published this month by Harper & Row.



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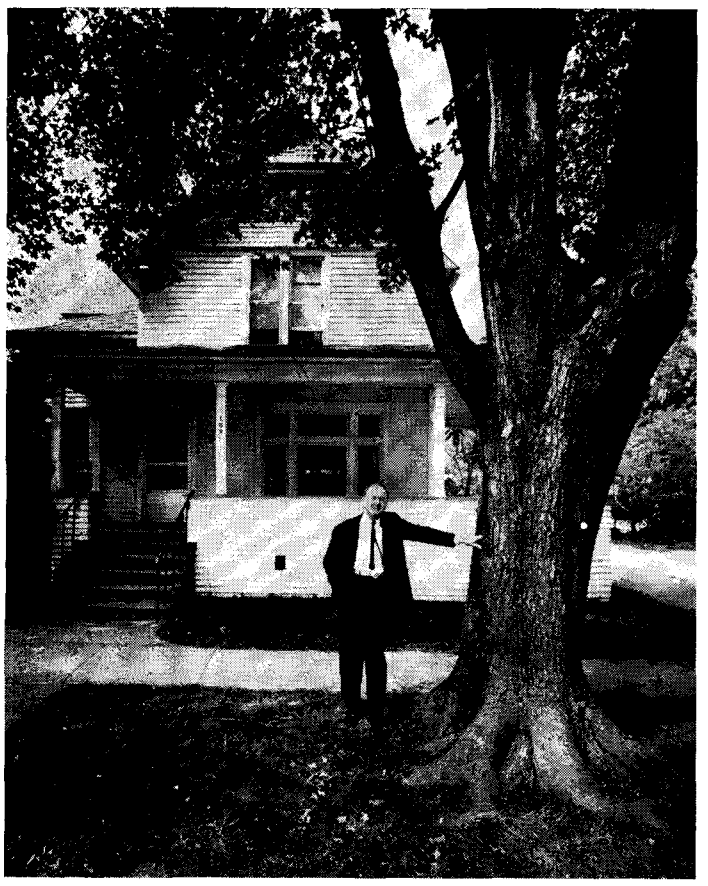
# Trains don't even stop at the Flushing depot anymore.



*Love went back to have a look at the house where he was born. "It was built in 1906 and was one of the most modern homes in Flushing. Everyone had electric lights, then, but we had built-in electric lights, with the wiring in the walls, and push-button light switches."*

There isn't much open country between Flint and Flushing anymore. When I was a boy, there were eight houses and a number of barns along the road, all surrounded by farms of 120 acres, or larger. Today the biggest single plot of unoccupied land is five acres. There are a number of large, modern homes surrounded by beautiful lawns along the way, and a shopping center. Right where Uncle Albert's farm used to be there stands a restaurant and cocktail bar.

I had already thought about the changes I would find in Flushing. Of course, I didn't expect to find the town exactly as I left it when my family moved away 41 years ago. I've been out to the village several times, mostly to funerals, and my aunt still lived there until 1959. The thing is that I had never really looked at the place. But *this* time I decided to explore the town. It is said that the American small town has disappeared, or is disappearing, and that many of the traditional American values have been lost because of this.

I spent the first 12 years of my life in Flushing, and I have always remembered it just as it was—a small Michigan village, a rustic place with dirt streets and heavy shade. Farmers with their wagons and their horses and buggies plodded along the streets. In the evenings the townspeople would get out hoses and stand talking to each other as they watered down the dust in front of their homes. The only strangers in town were the traveling salesmen who sat rocking on the front porch of the hotel in the evening. The people of Flushing, themselves, rarely went anywhere. It was an insular world, off the beaten track. People who wanted to get there had to look for it. Life was quiet, and there was very little to disturb it.

Of all the marks of the American small town in the first years of this century, this insularity is the most significant. Some indication of what it meant can be seen by comparing Flushing with the city of Flint, which was only 10 miles up the river. Flint, the county seat of Genesee County, was a prosperous trading center, with some small manufacturing. In 1900 it had a population of 10,000. At that same time 901 people lived in Flushing. Between 1900 and 1910 Flint became an automobile manufacturing center. The population rose to 30,000. In Flushing the population rose to 971.

The residents of Flushing didn't think much of Flint and had as little to do with it as possible. They had a distinct personality, and that personality was indelibly stamped on the town. It was different from Flint and different from Montrose, a town 10 miles in the other direction. It was not until after World War I, when the housing shortage in Flint practically drove people out to Flushing looking for places to live, that any inhabitant earned a wage by working in an auto factory.

Because I went to Flushing to look at the railroad, I decided to go to the depot first. I drove down East Main Street and through the business district, crossed the bridge, climbed the West Main Street hill, and turned in on the cinder apron to park my car. At first glance, the depot hasn't changed much on the outside. It used to be green. Now it's brown. It looked a little smaller than I remembered it, but I wasn't surprised at that. I walked into the waiting room, reached my hand through the ticket window, and turned the knob on the spring lock of the door that led into the station agent's office. It was the same door and the same lock, but when I was a small boy I had to shinny up the wall and balance myself in the window to reach it.

When I walked in that door, I think I half expected to see three or four men working at the various desks and to hear the clicking of the telegraph key. I wasn't entirely disappointed. There was Clare Fox sitting in the chair by the telegrapher's desk, as he always had. But he wasn't working. He was just leaning back reading his newspaper, with his feet up on the electric heater that stood where the potbellied stove once sat. Clare is over 60, now. When I first saw him he was just out of high school. He had just been hired as the night-trick telegrapher. He was a good one, too. He cocked his head as I walked into his view and then grinned.

"If you came here to see any trains," he said, "you're out of luck. There won't be any until day after tomorrow."

"I didn't think you'd recognize me," I told him.

"There's just something about the way you walked in here," he said. "People don't walk in here like that anymore."

The depot in Flushing was always the most imposing building in town. Fifty years ago it had two waiting rooms, for the station was a segregated one. It was segregated by sex, though, not color. On one side of the station agent's office was the ladies' waiting room. On the other side was the men's waiting room. Each had a huge fireplace, and at train time bright, cheerful fires would be burning in them. The men would congregate in one room and smoke cigars while they waited. It was not considered polite to smoke in the presence of ladies. (Each train had a smoking car on it with black leather-upholstered seats. It took up the rear half of the baggage car.) Of course, women never smoked, even at home.

In those days, Flushing's railroad was known as the Cincinnati, Saginaw, and Mackinac, (CS&M), although it never got within 300 miles of Cincinnati and stopped a good 200 miles short of Mackinac. It ran for 54 miles, from Saginaw down to Durand, Mich. It was built in 1888 to connect Saginaw, then Michigan's most thriving city, with the Grand Trunk Railway. The Grand Trunk was the great Canadian line that ran from Montreal to Chicago, and shippers could save 24 hours between Saginaw and the West by using it. Three years after the CS&M was built, it was leased to the Grand Trunk, and it has been operated by the Grand Trunk ever since. As a boy I could never understand why people called it the CS&M when all the engines and cabooses were plainly marked "Grand Trunk."

The CS&M was a single-track line, built with light ties and rails, and the bridges were of flimsy construction. After the Grand Trunk took it over, officials decided not to spend a lot of money rebuilding it, so all of the Grand Trunk's smaller engines were concentrated in the Durand area. These were the engines I knew. There were 80 of them, numbered from 2242 to 2321. The railroad men called these engines "goats." It was a derisive nickname, but *I* never saw anything the matter with the goats. I thought they were wonderful.

On the best day a goat ever had, it could pull 25 cars on a level track. On the CS&M there were some heavy grades, particularly out of Flushing, and these grades cut the freight trains down to 15 or 20 cars. Most of the freights were hauled by doubleheader engines, but even with two goats huffing and puffing, the longest freight I ever saw go through Flushing consisted of 38 cars. The CS&M was a thriving railroad and, because the trains were short, there were a lot of them. They followed each other into town in a steady stream, and the sound of train whistles added bustle to the village in the daytime and filled the night with music. At least, I thought so.

The Flushing depot was the most important station on the CS&M, and it was probably the most important building in town. All those trains running up and down the line had to meet each other. Five men manned the telegraph key in the depot on a round-the-clock basis, transmitting orders from the chief dispatcher to the train crews. The telegraph line was also the source of much of our news. The agency for both Western Union and Postal Telegraph was located in the station, but more came over the wire than personal messages. The first news of McKinley's assassination, the San Francisco earthquake, the sinking of the *Titanic*, the declaration of war in 1917, and Dempsey's victory over Willard were transmitted to Flushing through the men at the keys. My father used to call Tom Bulger, the station agent, every evening to get the baseball scores.

If the railroad was the lifeline for a town, it was a source of never-ending fascination for a boy. When I was in the third grade, my teacher asked the boys in my class what we were going to be when we grew up. Out of the 12 of us, nine said they were going to be locomotive engineers. We all meant what we said, too.

In a peculiar way, my attendance at school had much to do with my own particular love affair with the railroad. Nowadays Flushing has a modern, up-to-date school system that represents a consolidation of all the schools in the township. There is even a junior high school in the village, not to mention a Catholic school. Children of all ages are picked up by yellow buses in the morning and delivered at home in the evening. Some of them come from several miles away.

When I was a boy, Flushing had a township system of one-room country schoolhouses, and children ordinarily attended these until they finished the eighth grade. In the village itself there were two schools. One of these was known as the West Side School, and my grade happened to be one of the two grades that attended it.

The West Side School was the original school building in the township. Built before the Civil

**Photographs by Hans Namuth**

*There are more memories than people in the once-busy depot. "Clare Fox, on the right there, used to be a night telegrapher. He's the station agent now. Shorty Thomas, on the left, is a section hand who came after I left town."*



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*"The Flushing Volunteer Fire Department never had uniforms when I was a boy, but the men who served on it took pride in being selected. These things had ropes in front of them and were both pushed and pulled. A fire was a community event. Anyone near the firehouse would go help, and the carts would reach the fire with a stream of people in front and back."*

War, it was a one-story, brick building with two rooms, and it was primitive by any standards. It had no running water and no sanitary facilities. Electric lights and a furnace, to replace the old iron stove, had been added only a year before I started going there.

Drinking water came from an ancient pump in the front yard. If a student wanted a drink of water, he raised his hand with one finger extended. If he had to go to the bathroom, he held up two fingers and skittered out the back door. Two outhouses were perched on the very back of the school property, and getting to them involved a walk—or a run—of half a block. Going to those outhouses in the wintertime involved some physical courage.

The best thing about the West Side School, as far as I was concerned, was the fact that it was located close to the railroad. The outhouses sat on a bluff that overhung the tracks at the very point where they made their turn for the run to Durand. From any of the school windows I could look up the right-of-way for a mile or more, and I could hear approaching trains whistle long before I saw them. Even if I had been content just to sit and watch the trains out of the windows, I couldn't have picked a better place to go to school. Of course, I wasn't content to do just that. I had to meet every train. The school was just a half mile south of the depot, and I could run out the back door, duck down the bluff behind the outhouses, and be right on the tracks. From there I could run to the station in less than five minutes.

School started at nine o'clock in the morning. It let out at quarter of twelve for dinner, reconvened at 1:15 for the afternoon session, and dismissed for the day at four o'clock. This fitted exactly with the way the trains ran. The southbound morning passenger train was due at the depot at quarter of nine, just 15 minutes before school began. The northbound morning passenger train was due at 11:56, just 11 minutes after we dismissed for the noon recess. For seven years my life was perfectly coordinated with the trains and the school.

We lived in a house about a block behind the business district. It was my custom to rush out the front door in the morning, dash across the street, climb the wire fence around J. B. French's farm-equipment yard, and streak down the alley to the stores. I would let myself in the back door of Mr. French's hardware store, race down the aisles, and burst out the front door onto Main Street, arriving at the post office just as the mail was being placed in the buggy for the trip to the depot. Charlie Thompson, a round, little, retired farmer, had been hired to carry the mail back and forth to the trains, and I would climb up in the seat beside him for the ride to the station.

In a minute or two the passenger train would be rumbling across the Main Street crossing. John Reardon, the regular engineer, would climb down from his cab and start oiling the engine, and I would check with him on the health of number 2248. (John never drove any engine except 2248. He had put curtains on the windows and had painted the window sashes a Chinese red. There was some question as to who owned number 2248, John Reardon or the railroad.) After the oiling was finished and the conductor gave the signal, the train would chug slowly up the hill toward Durand. I would run along the tracks after it as fast as I could go, scramble up the bluff behind the school, and usually settle in my seat just as the last bell stopped ringing. On a snowy day, when the drifts were deep, I was often slowed down, but I managed to keep from being marked tardy by stopping in the outhouse and taking off my Mackinaw. The teacher always assumed that I had been to school on time and had taken a little detour.

During the morning session of school, the only train to come to Flushing was the northbound local freight. This usually waited in the next town to the south until John Reardon passed, then came on north. The engineer on the local was Burt Emans, and I knew his number 2315 almost as well as he did, so I never felt it necessary to check closely on it. I preferred to save my emergency procedures for the afternoon. However, if number 2315 had been turned in to the shop for repairs and there was a substitute engine, I felt justified in taking the necessary steps. I could tell a strange engine as far away as I could hear it, and the minute one of them blew for the crossing three miles away, I had my hand in the air with two fingers up. When the teacher noticed me and nodded, I would let myself out the back door and run for the outhouse. Instead of entering it, however, I would duck around behind it and slide down the bank to the railroad tracks. I would usually arrive there just as the engine came panting up to the switch at the south end of town. When it moved on into town to start switching, I would scramble back up the bank and return to school.

When we were dismissed at quarter of twelve, I was out the back door and running. I usually made it to the depot just as the northbound passenger train came roaring around the bend. I would check with John Reardon to find out how his number 2248 had survived the 30-mile round trip to Durand.

The afternoon was always busier for me than the forenoon because there was a steady stream of trains. The local freight would have finished its switching along the CS&M, and the main line would be clear so that the chief dispatcher could release a flood of through freights.

The afternoon extras were the trains that played hob with my schooling. Sometimes two or three of them would go by in the course of an afternoon, and they were always pulled by engines that I knew little about. The minute I heard a whistle my hand would go up, and I would run for the back door. The funny thing about all those visits to the outhouse was the fact that my teachers never seemed to realize exactly what was going on. For five of the seven years I attended the West Side School, one of the two teachers was my Aunt Esther, and she got so worried about all the trips I made to the outhouse that she told my mother my kidneys ought to be checked. My mother took me to see Doctor McKenna, our family physician. When I got into the room alone with the doctor and he started asking me questions, I had to tell him the truth. He sat down in his chair and started to laugh. While he was still laughing, he pushed up the cover on his old rolltop desk and wrote out a note for me to take to the teacher. It said, simply, that I should be allowed to drink as much water as I wanted to and that I should be allowed to go to the bathroom as often as I wanted to until further notice. This was an unexpected boon to me because it turned out that I could go and watch trains on *either* one or two fingers. Doctor McKenna died in 1960 at the age of 96, and for all the rest of his long life he never failed to inquire gravely about my kidneys.

The minute school was over with in the afternoon, I headed straight for the depot again. There were a lot of trains in the late afternoon, and I never missed any of them. Saturdays and other days when there was no school were always my happiest times. I was at the depot bright and early. When Burt Emans brought number 2315 into town, I clambered up into the cab, sat on the fireman's box, and leaned out the window on my elbows the way all good enginemen did. Nothing in the world could have kept me out of that cab.



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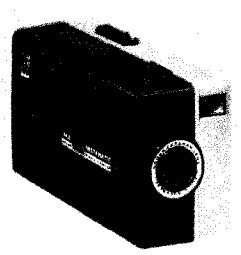

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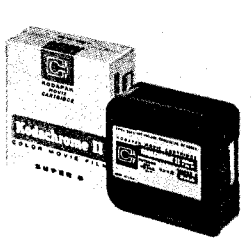

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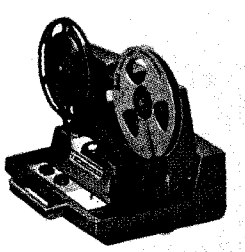

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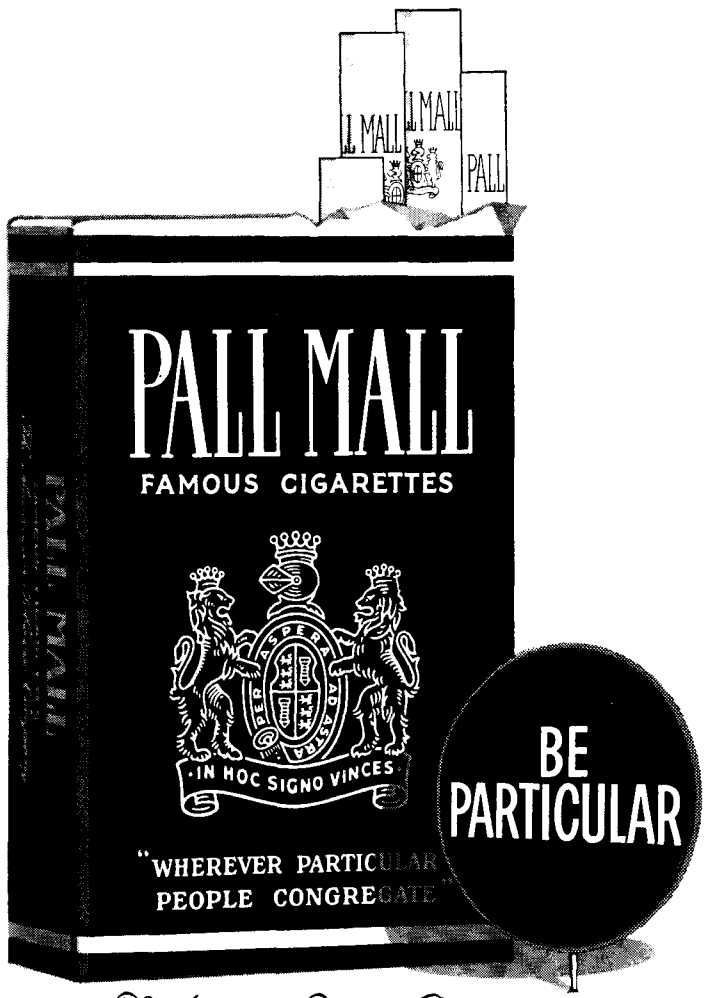


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# 'My father was the first man in town with

My complete absorption with the CS&M had numerous benefits. There was a matter of prestige. I was far from the best baseball player or football player in the village, but I always managed to be chosen first on all teams because I controlled engine-riding privileges. No other boy in town could crawl up in the cab of number 2315 without my approval, and once they *did* crawl up the ladder, they were under my complete control. When I took a boy to Burt Emans to get him a ride. Burt would consider the matter thoughtfully and then nod his head. "All right. You do just what George tells you." (All the railroad men called me George, why I do not know unless it was because they called all small boys George.)

One winter afternoon in March, 1923, when I was 11 years old, I came out of the West Side School in the midst of a driving snowstorm, just in time to hear a train whistle blow in the distance. I was electrified by the sound of that whistle because no engine whistle like it had ever blown on the CS&M before. I raced for the tracks and looked up at the engine in awe. It was a jack engine, a powerful one compared to those I had always known, and modern in every respect. I didn't know it, but the goats had been wearing out for several years. Out of the original 80, only 30 remained in that spring of 1923, and 20 of those last survivors were marked for the scrap heap before the end of the summer. Number 2315 disappeared that same April. One fall day John Reardon's number 2248 was hauled down from Saginaw at the end of the southbound local freight. One of its boiler tubes had burst. I was never to see it again—nor was I to see John Reardon. He retired when his engine wore out.

In the summer of 1923 a work train came through Flushing putting down heavier ties and rails. A pile driver reinforced the bridges. In July, Burt Emans came into town with a jack engine on the local freight. It was number 705. (Just to make the change complete, the Grand Trunk had begun repainting and renumbering its engines. I was completely lost.) I rode in the cab of number 705 many times, but I never had the affection for it that I always felt for number 2315.

The appearance of the jack engines on the CS&M had a profound effect on the railroad. A doubleheader of jacks could pull a hundred cars up to Saginaw. That equaled three or four of the old trains. Very soon the number of freight trains had narrowed down to two each way every day. Other influences were operating to reduce the traffic. Saginaw was no longer as important as it had been, and most people had begun to travel by automobile. By the fall of 1924 there were only two passenger trains left, one each way. In my last year at the West Side School, I sometimes went for two or three days without having to go to the outhouse.

Although I knew that the railroad had continued to decline over the years, I think I half expected to hear a whistle or to pick up the familiar click of the telegraph key as I sat in the station agent's office reminiscing with Clare Fox. Instead, there was the sound of a telephone bell, and Clare went over and picked up a phone and said, "Flushing." It was the Durand yardmaster, and he wanted to know if there were any freight cars to be picked up at Flushing. If so, he would send out a Diesel switcher. That's the way it's done nowadays. No trains. Just a switch engine that rumbles out from Durand in a few minutes, leaves or picks up a few cars, and then goes back to Durand again.

After he'd hung up the phone, Clare Fox looked at his watch. It was only two o'clock in the afternoon. He'd told the yardmaster to never mind, and now he turned to me.

"Well," he said, stretching, "I might as well go home. There's nothing more to do here today."

I followed him out the door. There wasn't anything more for me to do at the depot, either.

I drove back down the Main Street hill, crossed the bridge, and turned left for a block to Elm Street. In the middle of the block, directly behind the business district, stands a big white house. The street in front of it is paved now, but the rest of the scene looks almost exactly as it did 40 years ago. The huge elm tree still stands next to the sidewalk, with branches that reach over to the roof of the porch. Once when I was 10 years old, I had tried to be a daredevil and climb out onto the branch. I made it all right, but when I got to the main trunk of the tree, I couldn't get down. It was too big around. My grandpa had to get a ladder to get me back to earth.

I was born in the white house. All babies were born at home in 1912. Maternity cases were not considered the proper business of hospitals. As a matter of fact, no one ever went to a hospital at all unless he was considered a mortal case. Even the diseases were different. We had typhoid fever in the village, and scarlet fever, and diphtheria and every winter most people suffered from that great catchall ailment, the grippe.

Our house was not a Victorian-style house. It was built in 1906, and at the time I lived there, it was considered to be one of the most modern homes in the village. It is interesting to note what "modern" meant in the second decade of this century. For instance, we had electric lights. Everyone in Flushing had electric lights, but we were the only ones to have *built-in* electric lights, with the wiring inside the walls. In almost every other house in town, twin wires ran across the ceiling to central light fixtures, like a pair of railroad

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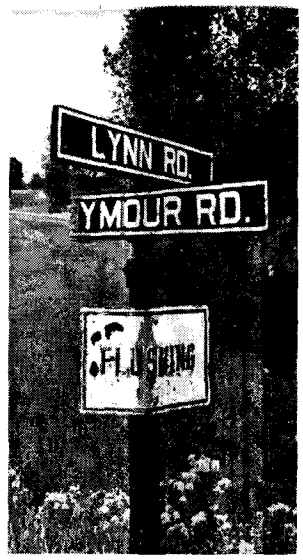


## faith in the automobile.'

tracks. We had push-button switches on our lights. Every other house had spring knobs that were hard for small boys to turn. There was no such thing as a floor plug in those days.

No one in Flushing put too much faith in electricity. They had good reason. Each summer, when the water in the river was low, the filaments in the bulbs glowed a faint orange, so everyone had to go back to kerosene lamps or candles for a month or so. We had the additional handicap of old Oren Hart, the nonagenarian tycoon who ran the Hart Milling and Power Company. He was an irascible tyrant who was continually at war with most of the people in town. After each argument, Oren would turn off his adversary's lights for a month or two. After the village voted dry, he turned off the lights in the Methodist Church. He claimed that the Methodists were responsible for the W.C.T.U., and if they could cut off his whiskey, he could cut off their lights.

Most people in Flushing had installed running water in their houses, but very few of them trusted that, either. They used it for bathing or laundry, but they wouldn't drink it. Nearly every house had a pump in the kitchen or outside the back door. My Grandpa Perry, who built our house, was so modern that he neglected to install a pump. During most of my boyhood, therefore, my first chore of the day was to go up to Mrs. Niles's pump on the corner and bring back a pail of water for drinking and cooking purposes. The pail used to sit on the table in the corner of the kitchen with a dipper floating on top of it. If anyone in the family wanted a drink, he just went over and drank out of the dipper. As a concession to sanitation, it was usually the custom to pour a guest's water into a glass.

Running water in a house was one thing. Running hot water was something else. Although there were hot-water faucets, no water at all ever came out of them. A large copper kettle was kept on the back of the stove, and if we needed hot water, we dipped it out of the kettle. About the time I was six years old my father tried something new. He ran water pipes around the inside of the firebox of the furnace and then up through the kitchen floor to a long, slender, cylindrical tank that stood on end beside the stove. From the tank, pipes ran to the various hot-water faucets.

The system never worked out quite the way my father thought it would. In the summertime when there was no fire in the furnace, we would always go back to dipping water out of the kettle. In the wintertime when the weather was cold, we were in trouble. Cold weather meant a hot fire in the furnace, and a continual hot fire in the furnace meant that the water kept getting hotter and hotter. Eventually, it would start to boil. The tank in the kitchen would shake, then it would begin to rumble ominously. Dishes in the pantry would rattle, and the pans on the stove would start to slop liquid.

For some reason no one in our family ever seemed to anticipate this, so that when it happened we all had to rush to general quarters. Some adult in the family would run into the kitchen and open a valve at the bottom of the tank. Immediately a jet of white steam would shoot out with blinding force, blocking any passage to or from the kitchen by way of the pantry door. Meanwhile, someone else would have rushed through my mother's sewing room and into the bathroom to open the hot-water faucets there. Steam would rush from these, too. A third member of the family would run out of the front door and around to the back of the house, entering through the back door to turn on the hot-water faucet in the kitchen. (We were never a well enough coordinated family to get the kitchen-faucet man past the water tank before the valve was turned on.) Within a few minutes, the whole back part of the house would be so full of steam that we couldn't see across a room. Each spring, after a winter of that kind of thing, the plaster would fall from the ceiling of the kitchen in great chunks and long strips of wallpaper would peel off the bathroom wall.

I cannot remember a house in Flushing that did not have a kitchen range, and I cannot remember a day when there was not a fire in ours. The kitchen range had a lot to do with shaping our habits. Major use of it was made in the morning hours, and the fires were allowed to die down in the afternoons, especially in the summertime, so that the women could get out of the heat. Because of this custom the midday meal was always the biggest and most substantial one. My father always came home for dinner, and we sat down at the table *en famille*, as did most of our neighbors. It was a hearty meal with potatoes, vegetables, hot breads, and dessert—usually pie.

Everyone in Flushing had a chicken coop and a vegetable garden. My Grandpa Perry, who lived with us, kept our garden. He was a meticulous gardener, and in addition to the acre plot he cultivated in our backyard, he had another plot down on the river flats in back of the lumberyard. In the one at home he planted long, neat rows of radishes, onions, beets, and things like that. In the garden by the river he put corn and potatoes. He also planted pumpkins and squash in between the rows of corn, but I didn't know that. At the head of each row of vegetables

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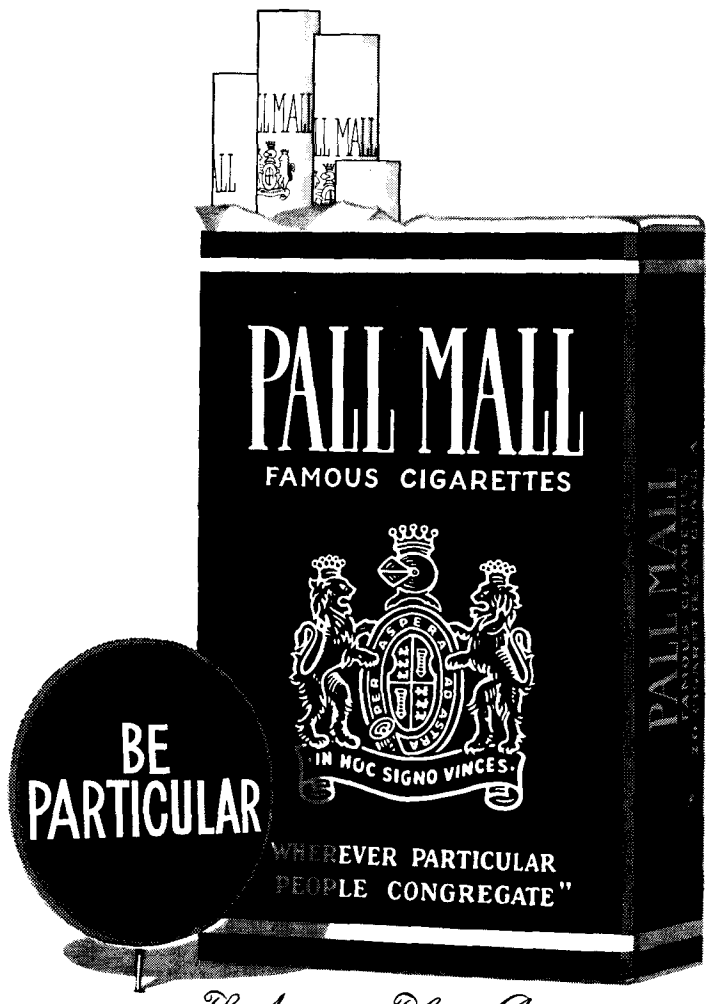


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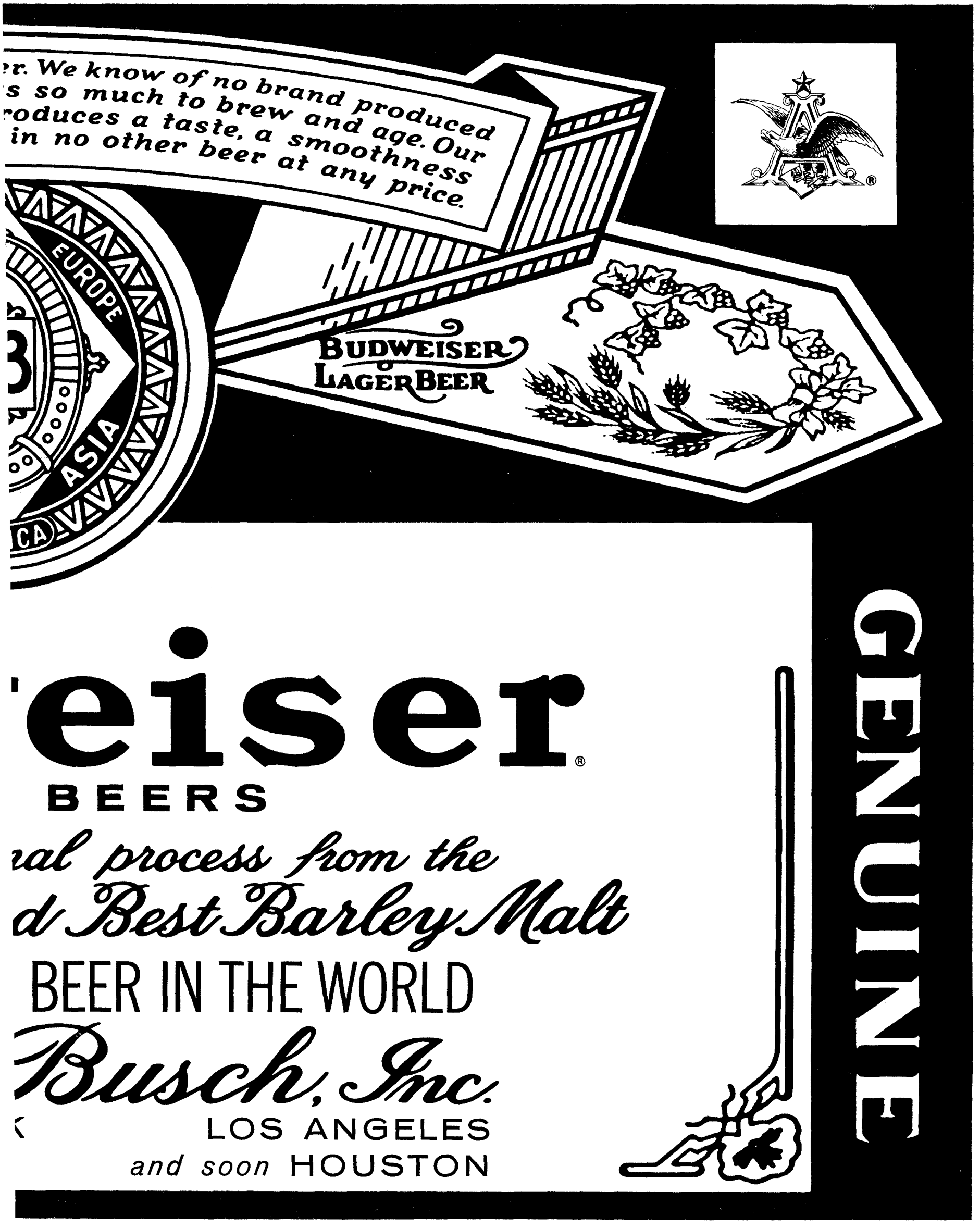


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# 'My mother stalked into the barbershop and took my father's shaving

he nailed the seed package to a stake, and anyone could tell what was growing there simply by looking at the pictures. Because he planted the pumpkins and the squash haphazardly, he did not bother to put the pictures on the stakes, and when I was six years old this got me in trouble. I was extraordinarily fond of pumpkin pie, and I was naturally concerned that we have enough pumpkins to see us through the next winter. I inspected the pictures that spring, and when I couldn't find any pumpkins, I began to worry.

As I have already mentioned, my usual route to the business district took me through the aisles of Mr. J.B. French's hardware store. Mr. French was a tall, dignified man with gray hair and a grave demeanor. From time to time, in my headlong rush through his store, I would be stopped and invited into his office for a talk. He always seemed interested in the projects I had going, and we had discussed possible business deals. I was quite taken with a Flexible Flyer sled he had on his second floor, and he had a very fine Ty Cobb baseball glove I could have used. (In the Michigan of my youth, *all* baseball gloves were Ty Cobb models.)

I knew Mr. French sold pumpkin seeds, so one day before I went through his store, I counted out the money from my savings bank and found two dollars there. I took it with me and told Alf Hand, Mr. French's clerk, that I wanted two dollars' worth of pumpkin seeds. Alf scratched his head, but he brought me back 40 packages of seeds, took my two dollars, and told me to wait for a receipt. He then disappeared into the office. A moment later a smiling Mr. French came bustling out and shook my hand firmly. He told me he was pleased to do business with me and asked me if I was going into the pumpkin business. I told him I was worried because Grandpa Perry hadn't planted any pumpkins. He considered this for a moment and then told me I was absolutely right to be worried. He was willing to help me. Inasmuch as I had established my credit by paying cash for 40 packs of pumpkin seeds, he was prepared to sell me 100 more packs. He would sell them to me at the wholesale price of a penny a package and would give me a year to pay. He had only one stipulation. I was not to tell anyone about the transaction because other people would be angry at the favoritism he had shown. This deal seemed like one I couldn't possibly turn down. I shook hands with Mr. French, and he escorted me to the back door with my 140 packages.

I planted pumpkin seeds somewhere in Flushing every day for the next two weeks. I planted them in the garden behind our house. I ran out of space there after the 25th package, so I planted a few packs in my mother's flower beds around the house. I planted them in Sarah Parmelee Perry Park at the end of the iron bridge on Main Street. After all, it had been named after my grandma. I planted them in my Grandfather Love's garden. I planted them in Tom Bulger's garden. I think everyone in Flushing had at least one pack of my seeds in his garden before I finished.

I don't think I lost a pumpkin. No one ever saw as many pumpkins as Flushing grew that year. Mr. J. B. French used to walk around town, smiling at first. Then he would stop in the middle of a block and start to laugh. At the end he was laughing so hard he couldn't stand up straight. People began to think he was going crazy or had taken to drink or something, but after a while, as the pumpkins kept growing, everyone else in town started laughing too. It got to be a rule not to touch a pumpkin so everyone could find out just how many there were. Someone eventually told who planted all those pumpkins, and I think I know who it was. My father gave me a little talk about being careful of Mr. French after that, but I never took it seriously.

Coming back to Flushing now, I would like to have wandered around the yard of our old house and to have gone inside once again, but I didn't want to disturb the present owners. Besides, I'm sure I know what has happened to the interior. The old kitchen range was replaced long ago and a natural-gas stove sits where it once did. There's an electric refrigerator, too, and a laundry room, and a bathroom on the second floor. There's an oil burner in the basement, and a modern hot-water heater stands beside it. I think I even know where the television set is—in my mother's sewing room. I could see what happened to the outside. The barn is gone. The chicken coop has been torn down. The vegetable garden has been converted to a lawn. And, of course, there is no outhouse.

It always seemed to me that our house was the center of the town. From our front porch I could look out and see the whole business district. In the square block that stretched out before me were all the institutions that made a small town run. Every street in Flushing was lined by large elms and maples, and most houses had wide green lawns. The downtown district, as I remember it, was a bustling place. Farmers and their wives moved from store to store. Little groups of townspeople stood on the sidewalk and chatted.

After looking at the house I lived in, I decided to walk around this block. Mrs. Niles's house still stood on the corner, but her pump is gone and the well has been covered over with a slab of concrete. I doubt if there is a pump left in all of Flushing. From Mrs. Niles's house I walked down toward Main Street. When I was a boy this block contained a barn where Mr. French kept more of his farm equipment, Tom McKenzie's blacksmith shop, Frank Fuller's blacksmith shop, the village icehouse, and the building that accommodated the town's firehouse and council chambers. It is a wide street and runs slightly downhill toward the business district.

Tom McKenzie was the town's busiest blacksmith. He always had two teams inside his shop and two or three tied to the hitching rail outside. The farmers would come into town and leave their wagons at one of the elevators for unloading, unhitch, and take their teams up to the blacksmith's shop. Tom wore a leather apron and carried a stool with his horseshoe nails from horse to horse. When he wanted the horse to move, he would give it a slap on the rump and swear at it. His forge was at the back of the shop, and he would stand in front of it holding a horseshoe in the fire with one hand, pumping the bellows with the other. He would yank the shoe out and pound it on the anvil, then turn and toss it the whole length of the shop. It would fly through the air, still red-hot, and land in a big wooden tub of water by the door with a big hissing noise.

The other blacksmith shop was interesting for another reason. Frank Fuller was the leader of the Flushing Cornet Band. He was getting pretty old, even then, and he didn't shoe many horses anymore, but he used to sit there in his shop and practice on his cornet several hours each day. Now and then some of the other members of the band would join him in the afternoon, and they would give an impromptu concert. Frank had a shako, and he would wear it around his shop. If I happened to be there when a horse came in to be shod, he would let me wear the shako. Frank also played the tuba, but he wasn't quite as confident on that instrument, and he never practiced where anyone could hear him. Quite often he would put the tuba over his head, take down his shotgun, and go out into the woods hunting for rabbits. After he got tired of hunting, he would sit down under a tree and play the tuba.

All of these buildings, except one, have been torn down now. In the big open space where the barn, the blacksmith shops and the icehouse stood, there is a municipal parking lot. On the day I saw it, there wasn't even a car in the parking lot. There was an emptiness there that made it look almost barren. The building that still stands is the one that houses the village fire station and the council chambers. It looks exactly as I remembered it. I noticed, with some satisfaction, that Flushing still has a volunteer fire department. They ride to fires, now, in two bright, shiny trucks. For most of my boyhood the Flushing Fire Department consisted of a two-wheeled hose cart and a rickety old ladder wagon.

The key to all the fire fighting in town was Fred Graves, who ran a barbershop down on the corner of Main Street. Fred had his fireman's coat and hat hanging next to his barber chair. Whenever the fire whistle blew, he would stop whatever he was doing and rush around the corner to open the doors of the firehouse. (At night he would take his coat and hat upstairs where he lived and hang them on the foot of his bed.) By the time Fred got the doors open, people would come running up to the firehouse. The first ones to arrive would grab the ropes on the hose cart and run off down the street with it. The next group to arrive would pick up the tongue of the ladder wagon and rush off. There would always be some people pushing as well as pulling. In 1917, when Joe Gage was elected fire chief, he had the firemen who owned cars put on trailer hitches, and the equipment was pulled to fires that way.

In about 1921, Flushing bought a new Reo Speed Wagon fire truck, and it became Fred Graves's job to start the motor and warm it up. The driver of the Reo was Pick Parsell, the village butcher, and once or twice he happened to be in his cold room when the whistle blew and he didn't hear it. Fred Graves went to some trouble to learn how to drive so that he could take over if this emergency ever occurred again. He would start the motor and count to 20, and if he didn't see Pick running down the alley, he would edge the truck out the door and start for the fire. Usually Pick would come running up before he got very far and jump into the driver's seat to take over. As time went on, however, Fred kept counting faster and faster, and Pick Parsell began to miss him. Joe Gage finally had to issue an order for Fred to leave the truck alone.

Fred Graves's barbershop was an institution in Flushing throughout my boyhood. It was the busiest place in town. Every adult male resident used to drop in there at some time during the day to get a shave. The walls were lined with shaving mugs. Each man had his own name inscribed on his own mug, and when he walked in the door he would go over to the shelf and take it down and carry it over to the barber chair with him.

No woman ever set foot in Fred Graves's barbershop. Most women didn't even like to walk by the corner. They knew that their anatomy would be discussed by the patrons as long as they were in sight. Fred never made any concessions to women at all. Indeed, he went out of his way to make them angry. Most women had experiences with him similar to the one my mother had.

My brother Walter, at the age of three, had a fine crop of curly hair. It was my mother's pride, but Fred Graves made no bones about how he felt. He told my father and both of my grandfathers that Walter's hair ought to be cut before he became a sissy. One day Walter walked into the barbershop, climbed up in Fred's chair, and ordered a shave and a haircut as he had seen the men do. Fred wasn't going to miss an opportunity like that. When her shorn son walked into the house that night, my mother cried.

A few days later *I* happened into the barbershop for some reason or other, and Fred told me a dirty story. I didn't know a dirty story from any other kind—I was only five—and I went home and told it to my mother, four-letter word and all. That evening my mother stalked into the barbershop and took my father's and both of my grandfathers' shaving mugs off the shelf. No one in our family was ever allowed to go into Fred Graves's barbershop again.



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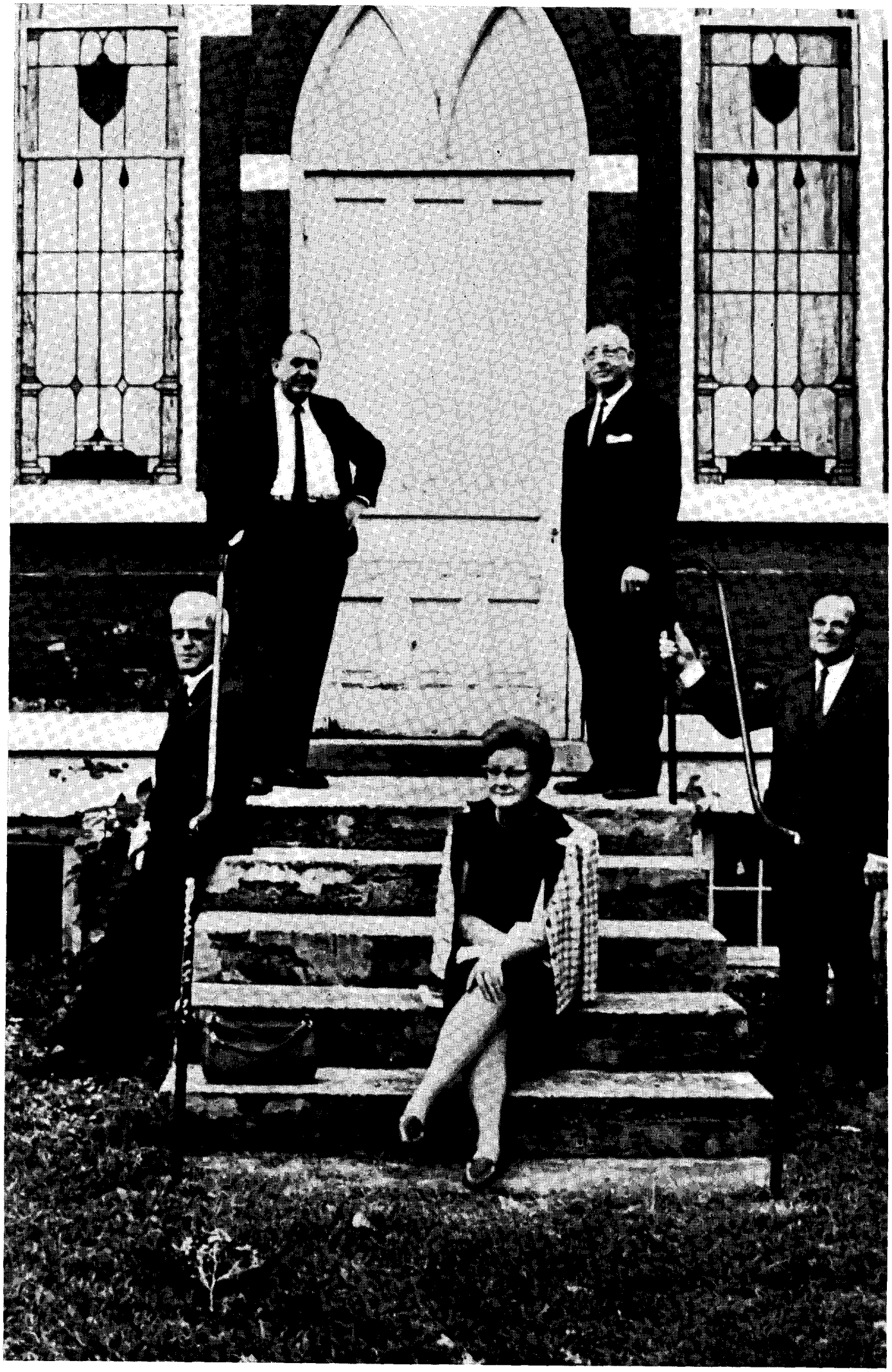
## mug down from its shelf.'

Fred Graves's barbershop was at the very end of the main business district, only a few yards away from the old iron bridge that crossed the river. From the corner on which the shop stood I used to be able to look up the slight hill and see all the stores in town. Every building is still exactly where it was when I last saw it, except for one. A new, one-story bank building stands on the corner of Cherry Street. In some cases the building fronts had been modernized, but there was no appreciable difference in the way the street looked. There was something about it that bothered me, however, and it took me some little time to realize that there weren't very many people in sight. In the middle of the afternoon, 45 years ago, there would have been many people there. The population now is four times what it was in 1920, yet there just wasn't anyone about. I walked the whole length of the business block and saw only 10 people.

The stores, today, are all different. There were 34 business establishments in that one block. There are that many today, perhaps more, but only four of these had familiar names on the front. For the most part, the prominent stores are chain stores. There wasn't a chain store in Flushing when I knew it. Another thing that I noticed was the difference in the types of business. There are four restaurants on Main Street today, of one kind or another. About the only place one could buy a meal in the village when I lived there was the hotel. (Of course, you could get a piece of Mrs. Darby's wonderful pie in the poolroom, but I don't think that counts.) Everyone ate at home then.

I'm not sure what is on the second floor of most of the buildings on Main Street today, but almost every one of them used to be occupied by a lodge of some kind. Like most small towns of that era, Flushing was a beehive of fraternal activity. We had Odd Fellows, Knights of Columbus, Knights of Pythias, the Grange, Ladies of the Maccabees, Loyal Moose, Masons, and I don't know what all else. My parents or my grandparents were always going to installations at the Eastern Star or bazaars at the Grange Hall. There were solemn meetings and social meetings and drill meetings and ritual meetings



*The author (top left) and four classmates assemble on the steps of Baptist church. Clockwise from Love are: Ken Dyball—"Lived on a farm and walked three miles to school each day. Regardless of the weather, he always got there. He's a teacher today." Lyle Cuddeback—"Always the most popular, did well in school, was the best athlete. His father owned the town's movie theater, and he ran the projector about half the time." Phyllis Boman Shepard—"The littlest and the prettiest girl in the grade, and probably the best liked. Her father, Edgar Boman, owned the men's furnishings store, and he was the most dapper man in all Flushing." Ernest Arn, Jr.—"A popular kid, probably the best known kid in Flushing. He had red hair, I remember, and everyone called him Pinky. His father ran the Flushing Hotel."*



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# 'Grandfather reached for

*"Joe Gage's house is a little old and run-down after all these years. Joe used to keep it white and neat. The place had a beautiful green lawn and flowering lilacs in front of the porch, and Joe kept it all immaculate." Joe Gage was one of Flushing's three barbers, the first Negro ever to live there and the best-loved man in town. Born of slave parents in 1867, he first came to Flushing in 1912. Before his death in 1956, he had served the town as fire chief, as president of the village council and as president of the Board of Commerce.*

of some kind every night. I suppose some of these lodges still exist in the village, but they couldn't possibly play as important a part as they did then.

In my grandfather's generation, much of the entertainment in a small village was furnished by these organizations. It was still that way when I was a boy, although the Board of Commerce was beginning to make itself felt as a social force. Once each year the Eastern Star put on a local talent show in which my mother always played the leading role, but the one I liked best was the annual minstrel show that was staged by the Board of Commerce. This was always directed by a dapper young man named Ray Budd, and the end men were always Jerry Gibbons, the village dentist, and Joe Gage, the fire chief. My Aunt Esther was in this show, too. She always played Aunt Jemima. Everyone played it in blackface except for Joe Gage, who was already a Negro. There was a surprising amount of talent in many small towns, but Flushing had more than its share.

About four doors up Main Street from Fred Graves's barbershop was Frawley's poolroom. The site is occupied today by one of the small restaurants. It would have been more appropriate if someone had opened a cocktail bar there. Before my time Frawley's had been a saloon, but Genesee County had voted dry some years earlier, and the word *saloon* was dropped. Whatever it was called, a person could still get a drink in Frawley's. Jimmy McNally, who ran the place, didn't serve very good whiskey. It was known as White Mule, and I have always assumed that it was made right there in the basement. The goings-on at Frawley's weren't mentioned, and such pillars of the town as my Grandfather Love, who was president of the village council, and Frank Wilcox, the village constable, were in the poolroom every day. Frank occasionally ducked into the back room for a quick kick from the mule, as he called it. My grandfather never missed a day without playing rummy there for as long as I knew him. I suppose he had his nips too.

I couldn't possibly walk by Frawley's poolroom without remembering my grandfather. To me, he was Flushing. He was more than that. He was of another generation—the generation which still ran things at that time. He believed there was right, and he believed there was wrong. There was nothing in between. He believed that a man's word was his sacred obligation and that there was no substitute for hard work. He believed that the only way to settle an argument was to fight with one's fists, and he believed that a man should be willing to fight at any time for what he thought was right. I remember him as an old man who stomped around town with a cigar clamped firmly between his teeth, the ashes falling down his front. Yet even as an old man he was formidable. He was a giant, standing well over six feet and weighing 250 pounds. He was possessed of prodigious strength.

The only man in Flushing who ever approached grandfather in physical strength was a huge Irish farmer by the name of Sime Bresnahan, who lived east of town. For a long time people conjectured about what would happen if Sime and grandfather ever had a fight, but because they were good friends it didn't seem likely that it would ever come about. One day in 1916 my grandfather got out his old Mitchell car and started for Flint. The road was still a sandy trail in those days, and once a car got out of the wheel tracks it was more than likely to get stuck. About halfway to Flint grandfather came to a horse and buggy plodding leisurely along the trail. Sime Bresnahan was driving it. Grandfather blew his horn for Sime to get out of the way, but Sime chose to ignore it. Grandfather blew again, and Sime still ignored it. Grandfather blew a third time and was again ignored. He then drove up behind the buggy and, after gently nudging against it, pulled down hard on the gas lever. The buggy toppled over into the ditch, and Sime went sprawling.

Grandfather stopped his car, got out, and went over to the upside-down buggy and helped the horse get back on its feet. By that time Sime had picked himself up and was ready for action. The fight that ensued lasted for half an hour. The two men took turns knocking each other down all through this time. At the end of it both combatants were torn and battered and muddy. They sat down on the edge of the ditch, exhausted, and lit up cigars. After they had finished smoking, grandfather helped Sime get the buggy back on its wheels, watched while he climbed up, and then gave some instructions.

"You drive up the road," he told Sime. "In a few minutes I'm going to come up behind you and blow my horn, and by Jesus this time you'd better get out of the way." Sime did. The next day they were playing rummy together, black eyes, bruises, and all. They were both 60 years old at the time.

Mention of that old Mitchell car of grandfather's helps to recall what that period and the people who lived in it were really like better than any other one thing. Neither grandfather nor any of his contemporaries were ever completely sold on the automobile. All of them accepted it grudgingly, but they didn't trust it, and I don't think they thought it had come to stay. Grandfather was never a good driver, and he always treated a car as though it were a balky horse. Whenever he got behind a steering wheel, he fought it. If anything went wrong on the road, he took it as proof that automobiles would never be perfected. I don't think he ever said a good word about an automobile in his life.

One of the first cars grandfather bought was a Ford roadster. Grandfather was almost as big as the Ford, and when he was riding around in it, he always looked as if he were going to overpower it. His head bumped against the top, and I always expected him to crush the steering wheel simply by squeezing his hand. It was quite a sight to see him crank that Ford. He would step up to the front of the car and spin the crank so fast that the car would jiggle and things would start falling off the seat. One day he was spinning it, and the car sputtered and backfired. The crank kicked back and broke his thumb. Grandfather looked down at the thumb in some surprise, then at the crank. He reached down, tore it out of the front of the car, reared back, and threw it through the windshield. Then he walked around to the side, bent down, grabbed the running board and lifted. The Ford flipped over in the ditch as though it had been a toy. Grandfather then walked to the nearest telephone and called Bill Frawley, the Ford dealer. "Come and get your damned tin Lizzie," he said.

Not long before I left Flushing in 1924, grandfather had to have a leg amputated. He had been found to be suffering from diabetes. When he was advised by the doctors to observe a strict diet, he announced that he didn't *want* to live if he couldn't have the things he wanted to eat. He kept right on with his visits to Frawley's poolroom every day and had his White Mule in the back room. At home he defiantly ate everything that was put on the table.

One spring day he stepped on a rusty nail. Gangrene set in, and for once grandfather was in a fight he couldn't win. One day he checked in at a hospital in Flint carrying a small black bag. He undressed, took a flannel nightgown out of the bag, put it on over his long underwear, and got into bed. Almost at once he was at war with everyone in the hospital. It started over the long underwear. The doctors and nurses wanted it off, but grandfather insisted he had



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**the offending crank, then reared back angrily and hurled it right through the windshield!'**

never gone to bed without it in his life and he wasn't going to start now. In the end it came off, although they almost had to give him ether first. The actual operation took place at nine o'clock the next morning. Around noon that day my father inquired by telephone if everything had gone all right. A nervous doctor assured him that the operation had been successful, but suggested that my father come right over to the hospital. There was some kind of emergency. When my father entered the hospital room about two o'clock, just five hours after the amputation, he found grandfather sitting up in bed, propped up by pillows, and in one of his blackest moods. My father didn't even have time to ask grandfather how he felt before grandfather pointed at the little black bag which had been placed on a chair in the corner.

"Open that bag," he said, "and get me a cigar out of there. The God damned nurses tell me I can't have one, but I'll be damned if any woman is going to tell me what to do."

When my father looked in the bag he found only a box of cigars. My grandfather had come to the hospital to have his leg amputated with nothing but a flannel nightgown and a box of cigars! While my father was thinking about the implications of this, grandfather sat there in bed puffing on his cigar in a very relieved fashion. When he had finished he heaved a sigh.

"I feel better," he said. He put the cigar butt in an ash tray, threw back the covers and swung his leg and the heavily bandaged stump to the side. "Now, let's get the hell out of here."

It took an awful lot of doing to keep grandfather in the hospital for the required number of days. The minute he got home he began insisting that he be fitted with an artificial leg. When he was finally convinced that this was impossible so soon, he had himself wheeled down to Frawley's poolroom in a wheel chair. It was less than a week since the operation, and there he sat, banging the cards down on the table so hard the glasses jumped.

Walking up Main Street from what used to be Frawley's poolroom, I came to the Dawn Theater. It is painted green now, but otherwise it looks much the same as it always did. I remember it as the New Ideal Theater. I sat in the first audience that ever saw a movie in it.

The movies came to Flushing before the New Ideal Theater was built. Mr. John Cuddeback brought them there in 1912, the year I was born. He opened the original Ideal Theater on the ground floor of the Odd Fellows Hall. He presented a midweek program on Wednesdays and a weekend program on Saturdays and Sundays. All performances were evening ones. Because of the Wednesday-evening programs, John Cuddeback was at war with half the parents in Flushing. He wanted to fill his theater, and he carefully selected pictures and stars that would draw. Tom Mix and Charlie Chaplin were Wednesday-night men. Tarzan came to town on Wednesdays. The serials were always shown then. Naturally, all of us wanted to see these pictures. The trouble was that Wednesday was a school night. Mothers and fathers, including my own, were having none of that movies-on-a-school-night business. Despite howls of anguish and tantrums and heated arguments, a certain group of parents never gave in, and John Cuddeback wouldn't give in, either. I was in the group that never got to see Tom Mix or Charlie Chaplin. Of course, we had a few heroes on Saturday night. Douglas Fairbanks, Fatty Arbuckle, and William S. Hart (we always pronounced it William Esshart) were Saturday-night men, and we had to stand up for them. Violent arguments and fist fights over the relative merits of these two groups of actors frequently broke out at school, and after I'd been beaten up a few times I came to have rather a dim view of both Tom Mix and Charlie Chaplin. To this day I've never thought Chaplin was as funny as a lot of people have claimed he was.

Aside from this rather irrational prejudice, and the necessity of sitting through a lot of mushy pictures with dopey women such as Elsie Ferguson, Colleen Moore and Lillian Gish, I didn't really suffer from going to the movies only on Saturday night. We got *all* the epics. We could always tell when a picture was going to be an epic because Mrs. Cuddeback brought her violin and played along with Mrs. Banning, the piano player, on such occasions. Mrs. Cuddeback was very good on *Hearts and Flowers*. Her repertoire was limited, but she could handle that one piece as well as anyone I ever heard.

After Hart's Milling and Power Company burned in 1918, Flushing was without electricity for 18 months, and so, of course, there were no movies. John Cuddeback took advantage of this long break to build the New Ideal Theater. He advertised that it would be the finest theater in the whole state, and I could well believe it, if only for one innovation. We were used to going to films that were interrupted every few minutes. We would just start to get interested when a sign would come on the screen that said, END OF REEL ONE. REEL TWO WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY. The lights would go on, and the boys and girls would run up and down the aisles, and grown-ups would turn around in their seats and talk to neighbors until John Cuddeback got the reels changed. There would be no more of that. In the new theater there were two projectors, and the picture would proceed from beginning to end.

The big attraction at the New Ideal Theater was the Mighty Wurlitzer Orchestra. It came in a huge square case with windows on three sides so that people could see what was going on. There were two violins which were actually bowed, two cornets whose keys went up and down, a xylophone, a saxophone, a bass drum, a snare drum, a pair of cymbals and other instruments. When all these instruments started playing I couldn't take my eyes off them.

The box was connected to a piano-like instrument that sat in the pit. Theoretically, one played the piano the way he played any piano, and the sounds of a piano came out. If the pianist wanted a violin accompaniment, he just pulled a knob above the keyboard marked "violins" and kept right on playing. The violins joined in. Any other instrument could be brought in the same way. But the whole contraption baffled Mrs. Banning. She would play along as she always had done, keeping one eye on the screen. When she began to get excited, she would reach for a knob. She invariably pulled the wrong one. William Esshart would be chasing Indians, and a violin would start playing. Norma Talmadge would be dying to the rat-a-tat-tat of a snare drum. Strongheart (*there* was a dog for you) would be barking like a xylophone. It got so bad, finally, that John Cuddeback told Mrs. Banning to leave the knobs alone. He even brought back Mrs. Cuddeback with her violin.

From the movie theater it is just a short walk to the corner of Cherry Street, the upper end of the business district. In my boyhood I spent a lot of time in three of the shops in that part of the block. Fred Niles ran a jewelry shop there, and I sometimes think he made a fortune selling me Ingersoll watches. If he did, he lost it right back, because I was in there every day getting my newest watch repaired. As I remember it, Fred gave a guarantee of some kind. He should have known better. I kept my watch in my fob pocket, and someone was always hitting me there and breaking the crystal. On other occasions I would take it apart and then not be able to get it back together again. Fred never charged me anything for all the work he did, so he *must* have given a guarantee.

Flushing's two other barbershops, besides Fred Graves's, were in that stretch between the New Ideal Theater and Cherry Street. One of the barbershops belonged to Fred Goyer. He was the village's economy barber. He charged 10 cents for a haircut. About all he did was run a set of clippers over your head. He had one barber chair and 15 straight-back chairs along the wall. Every one of those chairs was filled from early in the morning until late at night by farmers and high-school boys. As each customer was shorn and left the shop, all the other people would get up and move along a chair. If anyone tried to get ahead of where he should be, Fred Goyer would look out from under his green eyeshade and point his scissors at the offender, who would then have to go way back to the end of the line. My mother would never let me go into Fred Goyer's shop, either. She claimed that the only thing that ever came out of there were tramps. No matter what a man looked like when he went in, he looked worse when he came out.

The third barbershop belonged to Joe Gage. Of all the people who ever came to Flushing, Joe Gage was the most loved and most respected. As I have already mentioned, Joe was a Negro—the first man of his race ever to live in the village. He had been born of slave parents in 1867 and had made his living as a coal miner, picking up extra money on the side as a prizefighter. He came to town in 1912 to take part in a boxing exhibition. He liked the quiet greenness of Flushing and he stayed. He was a talented and dignified man, and before he died at the age of 89, he served the village as fire chief, as president of the village council, and as president of the Board of Commerce. Whatever else Joe Gage did—he and his wife were involved in several business enterprises—he was always a barber. It was the women who made Joe a success in Flushing. It wasn't easy. He was never a cheap barber. He charged 75 cents for a haircut, an astronomical sum for those days. People paid it. Mothers knew their children would be properly groomed and that they themselves could go into Joe's shop without hearing any profanity or being subjected to ribald sneers. Later on, when women started bobbing their hair, Joe got *all* of that business, and he prospered.

I do not think that Joe Gage overcharged for his haircuts. Indeed, he may have undercharged. A boy certainly got his money's worth. Once he had been to Joe's shop he never wanted to go anywhere else. Joe gave lollipops to his customers. He also gave balloons, tops, kites and baseballs. He entertained his customers as he cut their hair. He would stop in the middle of whatever he was doing and put on the boxing gloves and go a quick round with a boy. He would Indian-wrestle, play mumblety-peg, or teach a boy how to whittle. He would repair a coaster wagon or paint a name on a sled. He was the best whistler who ever came to Flushing. He could imitate birds or whistle a song. He could sing. He could tell stories. Sometimes in the middle of a haircut he would get so engrossed in one of his own stories that he would draw up a stool and sit on it. No one ever lived in the village who had a way with boys like Joe did. When my brother John, at the age of three, walked into *his* shop and asked for a shave, a shave was forthcoming. Joe lathered John's face, used the back of a comb to shave off the lather, applied a hot towel, and finished off with a generous application of lilac water. John's Buster Brown haircut was left intact.

There is one point that should be made about Joe Gage. He was a genial, pleasant person who was always accommodating, but he kowtowed to no one. Shortly after he opened his shop, he went marching into Fred Graves's place one morning and shook his fist under Fred's nose.

"It's all right for you to say that I don't give good haircuts, Fred, and it's all right if you tell them I charge too much money, but don't you ever tell people again not to come to me because I'm a nigger, or I'll be down here and break you in two."

Fred never mentioned Joe's color again.

On one of my visits to Flushing to see



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# 'The truth of the matter is that Flushing is gone. In its place stands a suburb of Flint.'

*Mrs. John Cuddeback shows Edmund Love her picture album. Her husband brought the movies to Flushing the year Love was born. "Our heroes were Douglas Fairbanks, Fatty Arbuckle and William S. Hart (we always pronounced it William Esshart). We sat through a lot of mushy pictures with dopey women like Elsie Ferguson, Colleen Moore and Lillian Gish, but we got all the epics. We could tell when it was going to be an epic because Mrs. Cuddeback brought her violin and played along with Mrs. Banning, the piano player, on such occasions."*

my Aunt Esther, shortly after the war, I learned that Mrs. Gage had passed away and that Joe was feeling a little lonely, so I dropped by to see him. He was 80 years old then, and when I came into his shop I found an anxious mother standing by the chair as Joe adjusted the big flat board across the chair's arms for a very small boy's first haircut. As soon as the apron was tied around the boy's neck, Joe got out a balloon, blew it up, then started to whistle a merry tune. By the time he'd gone through a clog dance and made a few faces, the boy was laughing. Before that haircut was over and before Joe would talk to me, he'd had to stop several times and whistle the song and do the dance again.

In 1954 I arrived in Flint for a visit with my father just as the Flint *Journal* published a feature article about Joe Gage in the suburban section of the paper. The picture that accompanied the story showed a little old man standing beside an ancient barber chair with a somewhat bewildered smile on his face. The article was a rather noncommittal piece written by a young reporter who had never heard Joe Gage play the bones or sing a song. Joe Gage, according to the newspaper story, had finally decided to close up his barbershop and retire. He was 87 years old then.

There were still quite a few old-timers left in and around Flushing at that time, and most of them read the article. A day or two after it appeared, my father received a telephone call from Tom Bulger—the one-time station agent. Tom wanted my father to join him and Joe Gage for luncheon the next week. My father was pleased. After he'd hung up the phone, he remembered someone else who might like to have lunch with Joe Gage. He called Ray Budd, the young man who had once organized all the minstrel shows. Ray was over 70, but his memory was still good. He knew someone else who would like to have lunch with Joe. That someone else called another person. Toward the end of the week, Tom Bulger called my father back. He was puzzled. Fifty people had called him. They all wanted to have lunch with Joe Gage. He had decided to rent a private dining room so that everyone could come.

But the telephone calls continued, and in the end Tom Bulger's small luncheon became a dinner at the Flushing Community House, because it was found that a total of 1,350 people could be squeezed in there for a meal.

On the day of the dinner for Joe Gage, people began arriving in the town in the early afternoon. The expatriates all came home. It was the biggest single homecoming the village ever had. There were people in town who hadn't set foot in Flushing in 20 years. When the speeches began that night, more than 2,000 people squeezed *inside* the Community House, and half as many more stood outside on the lawn. It was not only the biggest homecoming, but the crowd was the largest ever assembled in the village for any event in its history. It numbered three times the entire population of Flushing when Joe Gage first came there in 1912. It was entirely a spontaneous event. Everyone who was there had come because he *wanted* to be there.

It was a wondrously warm and pleasant affair. There were many speeches and much reminiscing. At the very end of the evening Joe Gage got to his feet. He was a wizened little man now, stooped and gray with his 87 years, but his mind was as keen as it always had been, and he still had a light in his eyes. I fully expected him to take the bones out of his pocket and go into a dance. His speech, like everything else about him, was simple.

"I don't know what I've done to deserve all this," he said. "I don't think I do deserve it. I've lived a long life, and most of it's been a happy life, especially the part of it I've lived in this town. If I had it to do all over again, I'd like to change only one thing. I'd like to be born with a white skin. I just keep wondering what it would have been like. I'm not finding fault. I'm just curious. But if I couldn't change it, and if I had to do it all over again, I'd make tracks for this place just as fast as I could. God bless you, every one."

Joe Gage died in 1956. On the day that I stopped to look again at the place where his old barbershop had stood, he'd been gone almost nine years.

Across the street from that little store building is the only monument ever erected to anyone in Flushing. It was put there in gratitude for the benefactions of Ed Cornwell, who died at about the same time as Joe. Before he passed on, Ed Cornwell became the village's only bona fide millionaire. He made his money in real estate and insurance. He kept his car in a barn across the street from our house, and every morning he would back out of the driveway and bang into the elm tree that sat in our front yard. He never missed that tree in 40 years, and shortly before my father's death someone asked him what kind of man Ed Cornwell had been.

"Ed was all right," my father said, "but I can't help thinking what a hell of a man he would have been if he'd ever learned to back his car out of a driveway."

Perhaps that marks the fundamental characteristic of Flushing and most small towns. The big things about a man are forgotten in some measure, and one remembers the little things—Joe Gage and his bones and Ed Cornwell and his long struggle with the elm tree. In Flushing you had time to notice those things, and you could pretty well take the measure of a man without regard to the color of his skin or the fact that he had a million dollars.

When I turned the corner on Cherry Street to make my way back to my car, I suddenly knew what had happened to Flushing since I left it. The whole story is there on that street.

There used to be a hotel on the corner of Cherry and Main. When I first knew it, it was run by George Mundy. At train times the hotel stagecoach carried passengers up to the depot. There were always enough traveling salesmen staying overnight to fill up that stage, and George Mundy made a good living out of the hotel. The building was torn down many years ago, and in its place stands a modern superservice gas station. The whole story of small towns is right there on that corner, for it was the automobile that made small-town hotels obsolete. It is the automobile which is responsible for much of what has happened to small towns.

I have good reason to know about this, for my father was a traveling salesman. In Flushing he was the apostle of change, a truly modern man set down in a world that belonged to another generation. My father was the first man in the village to own an automobile and the first one to understand what a car could do for a person. He had started out as a professional baseball player in the first years of this century. He spent three years in the minor leagues and part of one season in the American League. He could have gone on to become a regular, perhaps even a star, but in his off seasons he had begun selling lumber on the road, and he soon found that he could make considerably more money at it than he did as a professional athlete.

From 1904 until 1915, when he bought the Flushing lumberyard from my grandfather, he traveled the state of Michigan. Most of the time he traveled by automobile. At a time when a 10-mile journey in a touring car was a real adventure, my father was driving two or three hundred miles a week. While other salesmen were staying overnight in small-town hotels to wait for trains, my father was jogging along over abominable roads, repairing flat tires, getting out and getting under, as the saying went, and losing his way. But he was always two or three calls ahead of the competition. Better than that, he had confidence in an automobile at a time when very few other men did.

My father's attitude toward an automobile extended beyond business usage. He had no hesitancy at all about getting in his car and driving down to Detroit, 60 miles away, just to see a baseball game. Every summer he would rout the whole family out of bed at dawn one morning, load us all into the car, and drive 135 miles over to Grand Haven on Lake Michigan for our vaca-



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tion. It took 16 long, grueling hours on dusty, unmarked roads to make that trip, but we always came out at our cottage just as the sun was setting over the lake. (I made this same drive, not long ago, in two hours and a half without even stopping for gasoline.)

It is hard to believe how a little thing like my father's confidence in a car could make such a difference in a boy's life, but right up until the time our family moved away from Flushing, I was still the only boy in my grade at school who had ever seen a big-league baseball game. I was still the only boy in my grade who had ever seen the city of Grand Rapids. I was still the only boy in my grade who had ever been in swimming in the surf (Mud Lake, where most Flushing residents went swimming, didn't have so much as a ripple on its surface).

The big physical change in Flushing came in the first four years of the 1920's. Some people seem to think that the transportation revolution came because of the improvement in automobiles. There was improvement, but I do not think this was the real reason for the change. Between 1920 and 1924 every road in Flushing township was graveled. I know, because I rode on the wagons and the gravel trucks that did the work. As the roads in front of their houses became passable, even in bad weather, farmers bought cars and came to town in them. In the village itself, the old iron bridge that had carried traffic across the river since Civil War days was torn down and a new concrete span was built. In 1923 Main Street was paved.

Even though I saw most of this physical change as it occurred, I didn't see the full impact of it. One summer Sunday evening in 1923, while Main Street was being paved, I sat out on the fence that ran around Mr. French's farm equipment yard. Traffic had been detoured by our house, and there had been a steady stream of cars all day long. We had tried to play ball in the street, but we had given up. We were interrupted too many times. The funny thing about it was that all the people in those cars were strangers. Whole families from Flint were out for a ride. Some of them had never seen Flushing before. There were townspeople from Saginaw and Montrose and other towns. I didn't know it, but I was looking at a whole generation of Americans who for the first time had been freed from the environments in which they had always lived.

The people of Flushing were no different from the people of any other town. They were set free, too. This basically is the biggest difference in the Flushing I knew and the Flushing that exists today. The village hasn't disappeared—not physically. It still stands where it always did. Most of the houses that I knew are still standing where they always did, and some of them look the same from the outside although they have all been modernized. It is the outskirts of the town that have changed. The farms that were once working farms have been subdivided, and are filled with modern homes. Of the 4,000 or more people who live in the village now, only a handful were born there or grew up there or are even known there. They work in Flint, they shop in Flint, and they take their recreation in faraway places. The truth of the matter is that Flushing is gone. In its place stands a suburb of Flint. Its personality is that of Flint, and its people consider themselves residents of Flint. Many of them won't admit it, but it is true.

It is hard to tell whether this transformation has been good or bad. In 1918, when the West Side School had a bad fire, it was rebuilt exactly as it had been before, outhouses and all. The philosophy of the village fathers of that time was still governed by a frugal outlook. They weren't going to spend a cent they didn't have to spend, and if the insurance was enough to rebuild but not enough to install plumbing, then they wouldn't install plumbing. I see the fine hand of my Grandfather Love in *that* decision, but much as I admire him, I cannot honestly say that the West Side School ever was as good as the fine modern facilities that exist in Flushing today. Harlan Dyball, who was in my grade in school, is a real-estate-and-insurance man in Flushing today. I don't know where he lives, but when I knew him he lived on a farm. Every day, winter and summer, good weather and bad, he had to walk three miles into town and back, carrying his lunch pail. His children—or probably his grandchildren now—ride on nice yellow buses and eat a hot lunch in the school cafeteria. I'm sure they're better off than Harlan and I were, at least as far as education is concerned.

But if one walks a little farther up Cherry Street from where the hotel used to stand, as I did, and if he remembers what Cherry Street was like 40 years ago, he still has a gnawing doubt or two. Cherry Street starts on the river flats and climbs gradually up across Main Street as far as Elm Street. From there it tilts up sharply to run up out of the valley. It was on Cherry Street that I spent most of my time when I wasn't at the depot or in school.

In the Flushing of my boyhood we lived outdoors from one year to the next. In the summer we played baseball. We played it wherever we happened to be when the fancy took us. Someone would raise a hand and yell "Scrub One." He would be the first batter, and Scrub Two would be the catcher. Scrub Three would be the pitcher, and so on. It was too much trouble to go all the way up to the school where there was a playing field. Besides, there were no automobiles to come along the streets and bother us. We just marked out a home plate where we stood and picked the nearest convenient tree for first base. The only restriction we ever observed was to move a few yards away from any plate-glass windows. We had only one real problem in our games. That was getting a ball. We used a ball until there wasn't any ball left. When the cover came off, we wrapped it in black friction tape. When it got lopsided, we stopped the game and pounded it back in shape. When it started unraveling, we rewound it. Sometimes it would unravel too much and get so small that we could hardly see it. Then we would combine it with the remains of another ball and make a new one. There was no such thing as a softball in Flushing. I never saw one until long after we moved away. Most of us had gloves, and in the summertime we wandered around with them looped over our belts. If you got caught without your glove, you had to play the outfield. No one had any spiked shoes, uniforms, catcher's masks or chest protectors, of course. We didn't need them.

Football replaced baseball in the fall. There was none of this touch football with us. There wasn't even much passing in our game. We played straight-ahead, bone-crushing football, or around-the-end, zigzag football. In choosing up sides we always picked the biggest boys first. There was only one football helmet in the town, and that belonged to Gaylord Gibbons, the quarterback of the high-school team. Naturally, we didn't get to use it. Nor did we have shoulder pads, boned pants or nose guards. I broke my collarbone twice before I was 12 years old. My brother broke his arm. My cousin Max broke his leg. I don't think there was a boy in Flushing who hadn't broken something. I don't know how many shirts and sweaters I had ripped off my back or how many pairs of pants were torn out at the knees. My mother and father never complained about the torn clothes or the doctor's bills. That was one of the hazards of being a parent.

From November until April Flushing was covered with a deep blanket of snow. It never seems to have occurred to any of us to get inside where it was warm. Coasting was the big sport. When the first snowfall came we would retire to the Cherry Street hill with our sleds and our bobs to make a run. We would slide down the slope until we had deep tracks cut and until the snow was well-packed. Then we would carry water from the nearby pumps and ice it down. Within a few hours the run would be a slick sheet and we could whiz down it at speeds of up to 30 miles an hour. We would coast clear down across Main Street and out onto the river flats, three quarters of a mile away.

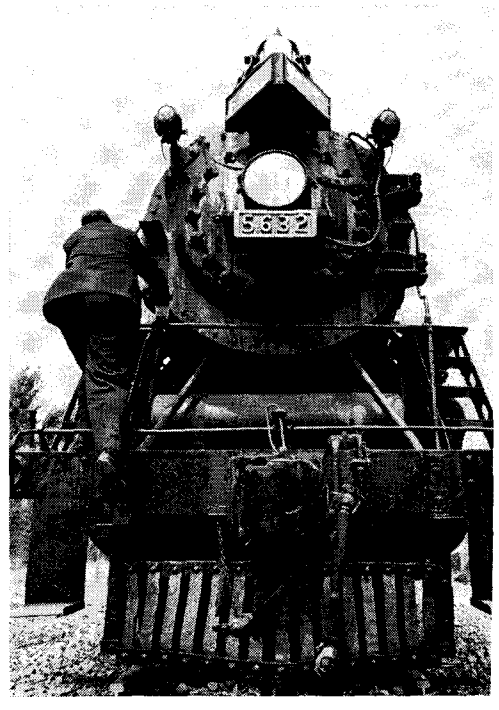
We had one other big winter sport. We indulged in it on Saturdays when the farmers came to town in their sleighs and cutters. We called it "bob-hopping." The idea was to catch rides on the runners of the sleighs. The most fun and the biggest challenge to our agility was the cutter. A cutter usually moved much faster than a team-drawn bob sleigh, and it took speed and expert timing to jump on and off. Getting off a fast-moving cutter was an exercise in courage. A boy's legs simply would not go fast enough when he hit the ground, and ordinarily he would go end over end in a somersault. I learned quite early to wait until I came to a big snowdrift before jumping off. I always ended up buried in one of these deep drifts, head first. After a whole day of wading and rolling around in the snow at this pastime, our clothes would be wet through and our faces would be a deep red from the cold, but no one ever thought of going indoors until darkness fell and the last sleighs were leaving town.

There hasn't been a sled on the Cherry Street hill in 42 years, now. There hasn't been a horse-drawn sleigh or cutter in almost that long. A group of boys can't pick up a ball game on the spur of the moment anymore. The automobile changed most of it. After Main Street was paved, my mother didn't dare let me slide across it on my sled. Other mothers felt the same way. The sport simply died out. And, of course, with all the streets paved they don't lend themselves to baseball. You can't slide on the macadam.

As I drove out of Flushing in my car that day, I knew the answer that I had come to find. The small towns are disappearing, if they have not already disappeared. It is not the physical town that I miss. The modernization of the houses and the improvements do not bother me at all. It's the emptiness that bothers me. The lack of people shopping in the downtown district and the lack of boys at their games struck me. The people of Flushing no longer look upon it as the center of the world. Their time and their attention have been given to something bigger—Flint.

I drove back to Flint and returned my borrowed car and took a taxi out to the airport for the nonstop flight back to New York. It only takes one hour by jet and eight more minutes by car to go from the world where I live now to the world where I was brought up. It seems like such a short time, but I don't think I'll ever go back to Flushing again. □

*Love, here clambering over the last steam engine in Michigan, has been fascinated with trains—steam engines especially—for as long as he can remember. "The best thing about my school, as far as I was concerned, was the fact that it was located close to the railroad. From any of the windows, I could see up the right-of-way for a mile."*



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Soon he would be going into combat, and this was his last visit home. Did he remember the good times? Did he know how terribly much she loved him?

# A Good and Gallant Woman

By RICHARD YATES

Illustrated by Austin Briggs

On Saturdays, when inspection was over and passes were issued in the Orderly Room, there was a stampede of escape down every company street in Camp Pickett. You could go to Lynchburg or Richmond or Washington, D. C., and if you were willing to travel for nine hours—five on the bus and four on the train—you could get to New York.

Private Robert J. Prentice made the long trip alone one windy afternoon in 1944. He was a rifle trainee, eighteen years old, and this seemed an important thing to do because it might well be the last pass he'd get before going overseas.

In the echoing swarm of Penn Station that night, feeling lost and cramped and lightheaded, he shouldered his way through acres of embracing couples: men whose uniforms looked somehow more authoritative than his own, girls whose ardor was a terrible reproach to his own callowness. Once he found himself walking straight toward a girl who stood facing him in the crowd, a slender, delicate girl with long brown hair, and as he came closer her uplifted face took on the most beautiful look of welcome he had ever seen. She didn't move, but her eyes filled with tears and her lips parted in a way that stopped his heart—God, to be looked at that way by a girl, just once!—so that he felt as stunned as a jilted lover when a Marine corporal came jostling past him and took her in his arms.

He was weak with envy as he turned toward the subway, and he tried to make up for it by pulling his wrinkled overseas cap down into one eyebrow and hoping that the tension in his face and the hurry in his stride might suggest that he was bound for a welcome as romantic as the Marine's had been.

But the subway only swallowed him into the dirty, intricate bowels of a city he would never understand, and when he came up into the windswept darkness of Columbus Circle he had to walk a few steps one way and a few steps another, craning his head, before he got his bearings.

New York was his birthplace and he'd spent most of his life in it, but no section or street of it had ever felt like his neighborhood. He had never lived in one house for more than a year. The address now shown on his service record as his home was a walk-up apartment in the West Fifties, on a dark block beyond Eighth Avenue, and as he made his way there he tried to conjure a sense of homecoming. He pressed the bell marked "Prentice" and heard the joyous answering bleat of the buzzer that let him in; then he was loping up a warped linoleum stairway through smells of vegetables and garbage and perfume, and then he was staggering in the clutch of his mother's hug.

"Oh, Bobby," she said. The top of her frizzled gray head scarcely came up to his breast-pocket flaps and she was as frail as a sparrow, but the force of her love was so great that he had to brace himself in a kind of boxer's stance to absorb it. "You look wonderful," she said. "Oh, let me look at you." And he allowed himself, uneasily, to be held and inspected at arm's length. "My soldier," she said. "My big, wonderful soldier."

And then came the questions: Had he eaten anything? Was he terribly tired? Was he glad to be home?

"Oh, I've been so happy all day, just knowing you were coming. Old Herman said to me

*After a while he stopped listening, but from long experience he was able to say "Oh, yes" and "Of course" in all the right places.*



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ROMANS, STAGE STARS AND YOU

Internal menstrual protection actually dates back to the days of the Romans. It was linked to their fastidiousness in building those splendid baths. Then the barbarians swept in, and such baths were gone for centuries. Internal protection next became necessary when stage costumes became scantier. Many stars used devices of their own. One day it occurred to a doctor that all women could benefit from this type of protection. And lo! there was the Tampax menstrual tampon, a great improvement over the hand-made variety. Its applicator, for instance, is made specially smooth; its removal cord is chain-stitched for safety. Since the doctor's happy invention, millions of women have used billions of Tampax. Join them!

INVENTED BY A DOCTOR—
NOW USED BY MILLIONS OF WOMEN

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this morning—you know, the ugly little *foreman* I've told you about? At my horrible *job?* I was singing this morning, or kind of humming under my breath, and he said, 'What've *you* got to sing about?' And oh-ho, I looked him right in the eye—this dreadful, smelly little man, you know, in his awful old undershirt, with all these awful factory noises going on—and I said, 'I've got plenty to sing about.' I said, 'My *son* is coming home tonight on *leave*.'" And she moved away across the room, fragile and awkward in her worn-down heels and her black rayon dress whose side vent was held together with a safety pin, laughing at the memory of her exchange with the foreman. "My *son*," she said again, "is coming home tonight on *leave*."

"Well," he said, "it's not really a leave, you know; it's just a pass."

"A pass; I know. *Oh*, it's so good to see you. Tell you what. How about a hot cup of coffee?—and you sit down and rest. Then I'll get ready and we'll go out for dinner. How would that be?"

While she bustled in and out of her bedroom, still talking, he sipped at the bitter, warmed-over coffee she'd brought him, and strolled around the carpet. The unkempt coziness of the place, full of cigarette ash and sagging, rickety furniture under weak lamps, was very strange after the scrubbed symmetry of the barracks. So was the privacy of it, and the fact that it held, on one wall, a narrow, full-length mirror in which he was surprised to find his own naked-looking boy's face above the brass-buttoned torso of olive drab. He pulled himself dramatically to attention, and then, after glancing away to make sure she was safely in the bedroom, he went through a series of drill turns, whispering the commands to himself. Right face; left face; about face; hand salute; parade rest. In the parade-rest position he discovered that she'd left a smear of lipstick on his uniform.

"There," she said. "Now I'm ready. Do I look all right? Do I look nice enough to go out on a date with a handsome soldier?"

"Fine," he told her. "You look fine." And she did look better, despite a sprinkling of face powder down her bodice. She had managed to close the vent of her dress more securely, and she'd carefully fixed her hair.

When they left the apartment, he noticed how she crouched and squinted to make her way down the stairs—her eyes were getting worse—and out on the street, where she clung to his arm for walking, she seemed very old and slow. At the first intersection she hunched and hurried in fright, gripping his arm tighter, until they were safely on the opposite curb. She had never understood automobiles and always tended to exaggerate their menace: She seemed to feel that any or all of the waiting, throbbing cars might bolt forward against the light with murder in their hearts.

They went to the Childs on Columbus Circle. "Isn't it funny?" she said. "I always used to think Childs restaurants were dreadful, but this really is the only decent place around here—all the others are so horribly expensive—and I think it's kind of nice, don't you?"

They each had a Manhattan to start with, because she insisted it was to be a real celebration; and then, after studying the menu to make sure they could afford it if they held the cost of the dinner down to chicken croquettes, they each had another. He didn't really want the second one—the heavy sweetness of it threatened to make him sick—but he sipped it anyway and tried to relax.

Her voice by now had become a rich and tireless monologue: ". . . Oh, and guess who I ran into on the bus the other day! Natalie Crawford! Remember the year we lived on Charles Street? And you used to play with the Crawford boys? They're both in the Navy now, and Bill's in the Pacific; just imagine. Remember the winter we were so horribly broke, and Natalie and I had those awful fights about money? Anyway, that's all forgotten now. We had dinner together and had the nicest talk; she wanted to hear all about you. Oh, and *guess* what she told me about the Wilsons! Remember? George and Amy Wilson, that were such good friends of mine that year? And they used to come out to see us later in Larchmont, too; remember? Remember the year we all spent Christmas together and had such a good time? . . ."

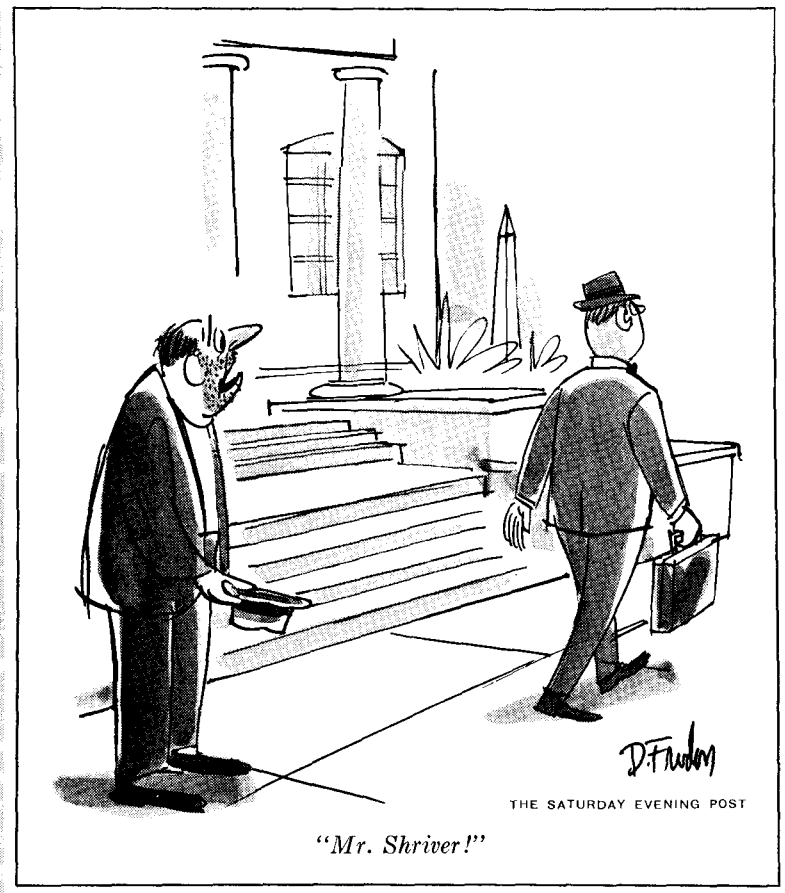
It went on and on, while he crumbled his chicken croquette with the side of his fork and made whatever answers she seemed to want, or to need. After a while he stopped listening. His ears took in only the rise and fall of her voice, the elaborate, familiar, endless rhythm of it; but from long experience he was able to say "Oh, yes" and "Of course" in all the right places.

The subjects of her talk didn't matter; he knew what she was really saying. Helpless and gentle, small and tired and anxious to please, she was asking him to agree that her life was not a failure. Did he remember the good times? Did he remember all the nice people they'd known, and all the interestingly different places they'd lived in? And whatever mistakes she might have made, however rudely the world might have treated her, did he know how hard she'd always tried? Did he know how terribly much she loved him? And did he realize—in spite of everything—did he realize how remarkable and how gifted and how brave a woman his mother was?

Oh, yes; oh, yes; of course he did—that was the message of his nods and smiles and mumbled replies. It was the message he'd been giving her as long as he could remember, and for most of that time he had wholly believed it.

Because she *was* remarkable and gifted and brave. How else could anyone explain the story of her life? At the turn of the century, when all the sleeping little towns of Indiana had lain locked in provincial ignorance, and when in that environment a simple dry-goods merchant named Amos Grumbauer had raised six ordinary daughters, wasn't it remarkable that his seventh had somehow developed a passion for art, and for elegance, and for the great and distant world of New York? Without finishing high school, she had become one of the first female students ever enrolled in the Cincinnati Art Academy; and not very many years after that, all alone, she had come to the city of her dreams and found employment as a fashion illustrator, with only occasional help from home. Didn't

## America, America




*"Mr. Shriver!"*



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that prove she was gifted, and didn't it prove she was brave?

Her first great mistake—and she often said afterward that she would never understand what had possessed her—was to marry a man as simple and ordinary as her own Indiana father. Oh, George Prentice might have been handsome in a quiet way; he might even have been a little dashing, with his fine amateur singing voice, his good clothes, and the salesman's expense account that made him welcome at some of the better speakeasies in town. It was undeniable too that a girl of thirty-four wasn't apt to get too many serious proposals; and besides, he was so steady, so devoted, so anxious to protect her and provide for her. But how could she have been so blind to the dullness of the man? How could she have failed to see that he thought of her talent as a charming little hobby and nothing more, and that he could get tears in his eyes over the poetry of Edgar A. Guest, and that his own highest ambition in life—incessantly discussed—was to be promoted to the job of assistant divisional sales manager in some monstrous and wholly unintelligible organization called Amalgamated Tool and Die?

And on top of all that, as if that weren't enough, how could she ever have predicted that as a married man he would disappear for three and four days at a time and come home reeking of gin, with lipstick all over his shirt?

She divorced him three years after the birth of their only child, when she was nearly forty, and set out to become an artist of distinction. It was a confused, desperate, and ever-thwarted career played out against the background of the Great Depression, a hysterical Odyssey that she always said was made bearable only by the "wonderful companionship" of her darling little boy. On a slender alimony which was the very most George Prentice could spare, they lived at first in Greenwich Village—always in "studio apartments" that cost more than she could afford. Later, with the help of a man she had every reason to believe was going to marry her, they moved out to one of the better Westchester suburbs, "for Bobby's sake." The man didn't marry her after all—he went back to the wife from whom he'd never really been divorced—but they stayed on, renting houses in one town after another, always in trouble with the landlord and the grocer and the coal dealer, never at ease among the oppressively neat suburban families that surrounded them.

"We're different, Bobby," she would explain, but the explanation was never necessary. Wherever they lived, he seemed always to be the only new boy and the only poor boy, the only boy whose home smelled of mildew and turpentine and cat droppings, with a wobbling rack of canvases instead of a car in its garage; the only boy who didn't have a father.

Yet he had loved her romantically, with an almost religious belief in her gallantry and goodness. If the landlord and the grocer and the coal dealer and George Prentice were all against her, they would have to be *his* enemies too: He would serve as her ally and defender against the crass and bullying materialism of the world. He would gladly have thrown down his life for her in any number of ways; the trouble was that other, less dramatic kinds of help were needed. Her paintings were sometimes shown in group exhibitions and very occasionally sold, for small sums, but these isolated triumphs were all but lost under the mounting pressure of hardship.

"Look, Alice," George Prentice would say on the rare and dreaded occasions of his visitation rights, plainly forcing his voice to sound calm and reasonable. "Look: I know it's important to make sacrifices for the boy—I agree with you there—but this just isn't realistic. You simply have no business living in a place like this, running up all these bills. The point is, people have to live within their *means*, Alice."

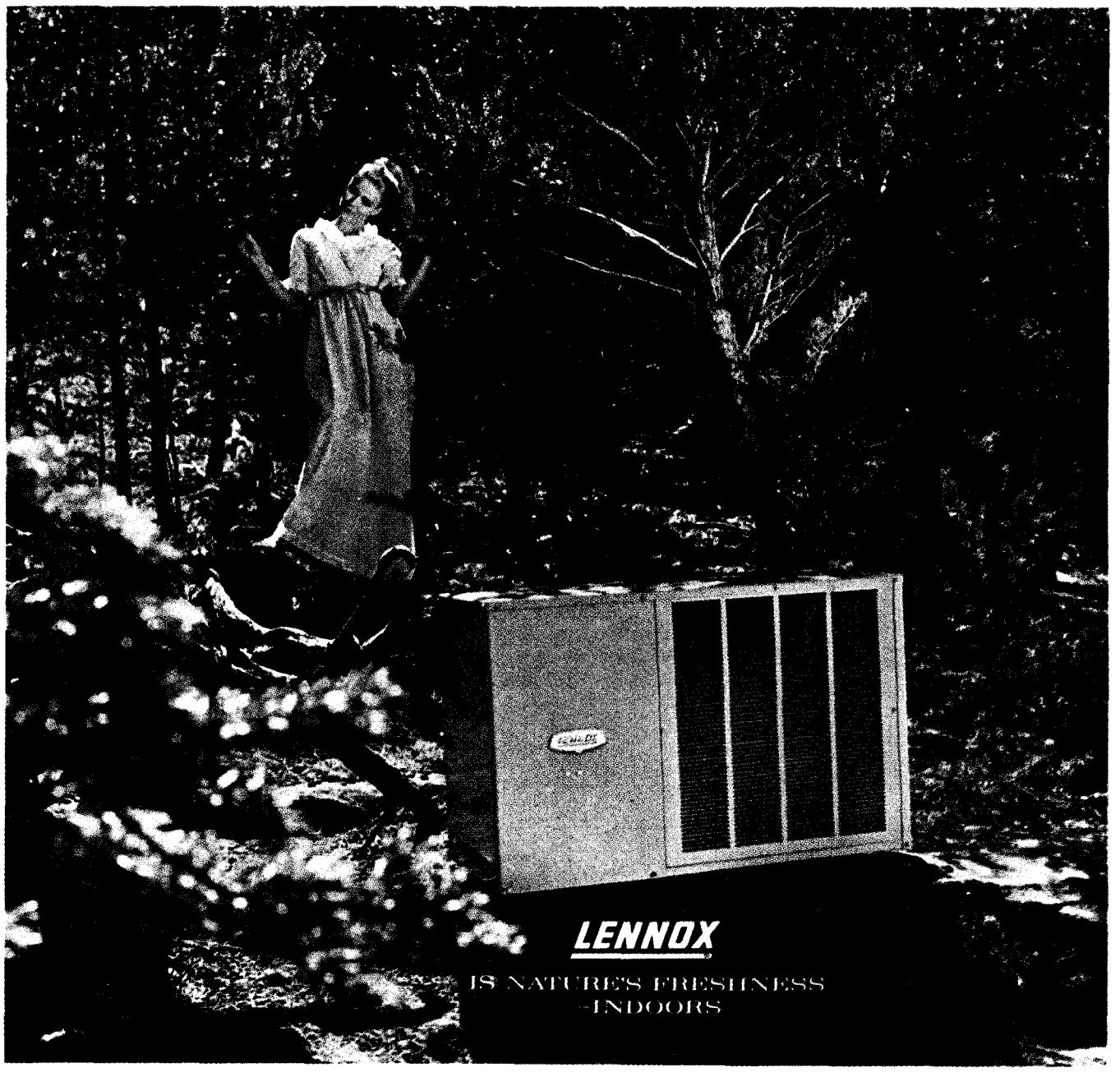
"All right. I'll give up painting, then. I'll never ask you for another cent. I'll move to the *Bronx* and take some wretched little job in a *department* store. Is that what you want?"

"No, of course that's not what I want. I'm simply asking for a little cooperation, a little consideration—damn it, Alice, a little sense of responsibility."

"Responsi*bil*ity! Oh, don't talk to me about responsibility. . . ."

"Alice, will you please try to keep your voice down? Before you wake the boy?"

Life in the suburbs came abruptly to an end in a welter of lawsuits for unpayable debts, when he was twelve, and they crept shabbily back to the city. And it was three years later, after a succession of increasingly cheap apart-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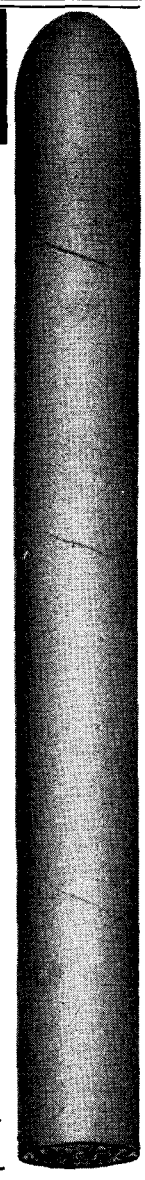

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ments from one of which they were evicted, that Alice Prentice made a final, desperate plea to her former husband. She would never be a burden on him again, she promised, if he would only finance Bobby's enrollment in what she called A Good New England Prep School.

"A *boarding* school? Alice, do you have any idea how much those places cost? Look—let's try to be reasonable. How do you think I'm going to be able to send him to college if I ——"

"Oh, you know perfectly well the whole question of college is three years away. *Anything* can happen in three years. I could have a one-man show and make a *fortune* in three years. I could have a one-man show and make a fortune six *months* from now. Oh, I know you've never had any faith in me, but it happens that a great many other people do."

"Well, but Alice, look. Try to control yourself. In the first place ——"

"Ha! Control myself. Con*trol* myself. . . ."

The school she chose was not exactly a good one, but it was the only one that offered to take him for half tuition; and the victory of his acceptance filled her with pride.

His first year there—the year of Pearl Harbor—was almost unalloyed in its misery. Missing his mother and ashamed of missing her, wholly out of place with his ineptness at sports, his cheap, mismatched clothes and his total lack of spending money, he felt he could survive only by becoming a minor campus clown. The second year was better—he gained a certain prestige as a campus eccentric and was even beginning to win recognition as a campus intellectual—but in the middle of that second year George Prentice dropped dead in his office.

It was a stunning event. Riding home on the train for the funeral, he couldn't get over the surprise of hearing his mother weep uncontrollably on the telephone. She had sounded as bereaved as a real widow, and he'd almost wanted to say, "What the hell, Mother—you mean we're supposed to *cry* when he dies?"

And he was appalled at her behavior in the funeral parlor. Moaning, she collapsed into the heaped flowers and planted a long and passionate kiss on the dead man's waxen face. Recorded organ music was droning somewhere in the background, and there was a long, solemn line of men from Amalgamated Tool and Die waiting to pay their respects (he had an awful suspicion that her histrionics were being conducted for *their* benefit). And although his first impulse was to get the hell out of there as fast as possible, he lingered at the coffin for a long time after the conclusion of her scene. He stared down into the plain, still face of George Prentice and tried to study every detail of it, to atone for all the times he had never quite looked the man in the eye. He dredged his memory for the slightest trace of real affection for this man (birthday presents? trips to the circus?), and for the faintest glimmer of a time when the man might have known anything but uneasiness and disappointment in the presence of his only child; but it was no use. Turning away from the corpse at last and taking her arm, he looked down at her weeping head with revulsion. It was *her* fault. She had robbed him of a father and robbed his father of a son, and now it was too late.

But he began to wonder darkly if it mightn't be his own fault too, even more than hers. He almost felt as if he had killed the man himself with his terrible, inhuman indifference all these years. All that he wanted to do just then was to get away from this sobbing, shuddering old woman and go back to school, where he could think things out.

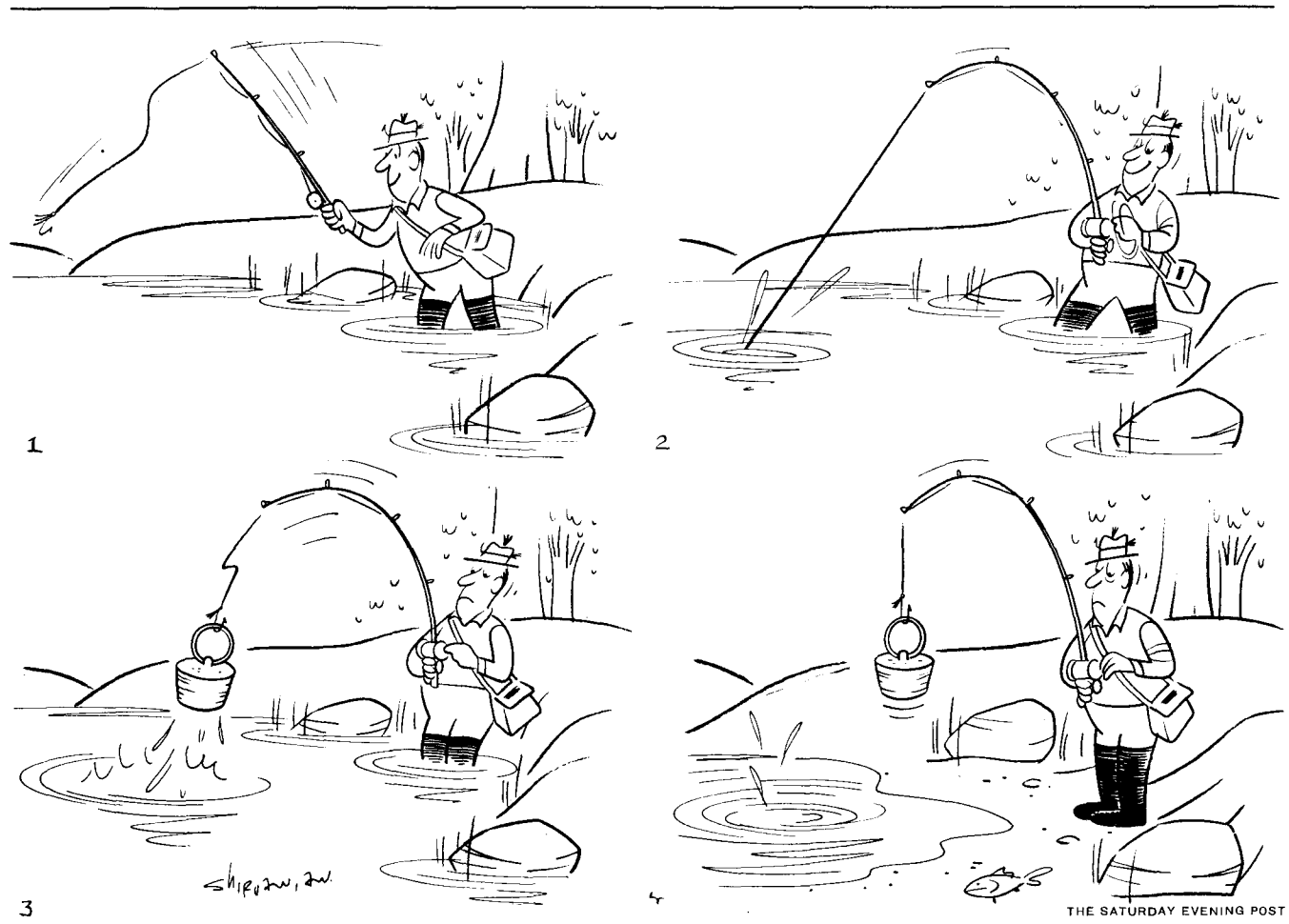
And his father's death brought another, more practical kind of loss: There was no more money. This was something he wasn't fully aware of until he came home the following summer, not long after he'd turned seventeen, to find her in a cheap hotel room for which the rent was already in arrears. She had put all her paintings and whatever was left of her furniture into storage, and the storage payments were in arrears too. For months, with a total lack of success, she had been trying to re-establish herself as a fashion illustrator after a twenty-year absence from the field. Even he could see how stiff and labored and hopelessly unsalable-looking her drawings were, though she explained that it was all a question of making the right contacts; and he'd been with her for less than a day before discovering that she didn't have enough to eat. She had been living for weeks on canned soup and hash.

"Look," he said, only dimly aware of sounding like the ghost of George Prentice. "This isn't any way for you to live. Hell, *I'll* get some kind of a job."

And he went to work in an automobile-parts warehouse. On the strength of that, they moved into the furnished apartment in the West Fifties, and the "wonderful companionship" entered a strange new phase.

Feeling manly and pleasurably proletarian as he clumped home every night in his work clothes, he saw himself as the hero of some inspiring movie about the struggles of the poor. "Hell, I started out as a warehouseman," he would be able to say for the rest of his life. "Had to quit school and support my mother, after my dad died. Those were pretty tough times."

The trouble was that his mother refused to play her role in the movie. It couldn't be denied that he was supporting her—she often had to meet him outside the warehouse at noon on pay-



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day, in fact, in order to be able to buy her lunch—but nobody would ever have guessed it. He kept hoping to come home and find her acting the way he thought she ought to act: a humble widow, gratefully cooking meat and potatoes for her tired son, sitting down with her sewing basket as soon as she'd washed the dishes, darning his socks in the lamplight and perhaps looking up to inquire, shyly, if he wouldn't like to call up some nice girl.

And he was always disappointed. Night after night was given over to her talk about the contacts she was certain to establish soon in the fashion field, and about the fortunes still to be made out of one-man shows, if only she could afford to get her paintings out of storage, while the canned food burned on the stove.

Once, he found her posing for his admiration in a stylish new dress, for which she'd spent more than half the week's grocery money, and when he failed to be enthusiastic about it she explained, as if she were talking to a retarded child, that no one could possibly expect to get ahead in the fashion world wearing last year's clothes.

"Oh, yes, Bobby's fine," he heard her telling someone on the telephone, another time. "He's taken a summer job. Oh, just a little laboring job, in some dreadful warehouse—*you* know the kind of thing boys do in the summertime—but he seems to be enjoying it, and I think the experience will do him a world of good. . . ."

He had assumed, with mixed emotions, that he wouldn't be going back to school for his senior year, but when September came around she told him not to be ridiculous. He *had* to graduate; it would break her heart if he didn't.

"Well, but look: What're you going to do?"

"Dear, I've explained all that. Something's bound to happen soon with this fashion work; you know how hard I'm trying. And then just as *soon* as I can get my paintings out of storage, there's no telling what good things are going to come our way. Don't you see?"

"Well, sure, but I'm not talking about *soon*. I'm talking about *now*. How are you going to pay the rent? How the hell are you going to eat?"

"Oh, I'll always manage; that's not important. I'll *borrow* some money if I have to. That's nothing to ——"

"Who from? And anyway, you can't go on borrowing indefinitely, can you?"

She looked at him incredulously, slowly shaking her head with a world-weary smile, and then she said it: "You sound just like your father."

The argument went on for hours, in ever-rising spirals of unreasoning shrillness, until at last, after hearing one more time and at great length about the valuable contacts that were certain to be hers, he turned on her and said, "Oh, ----!"

And she burst into tears. Then, as if shot, she clutched at her heart and collapsed full-length on the floor, splitting an armpit seam of the dress that was supposed to be her means of advancement in the fashion world. She lay face down, quivering all over and making spastic little kicks with her feet, while he stood and watched.

This was a thing he'd often seen her do before. The first time, long ago, had taken place after the landlord in Larchmont had threatened to evict them, and after she'd called George Prentice to plead for the several hundred dollars they would need to settle the debt. "All right!" she had cried into the telephone. "All right! But I'm warning you, I'll kill myself tonight!" And, rising from the slammed-down phone, she had grabbed her breast and fallen to the carpet, and her little boy had tried to put both fists in his mouth to stifle his terror until she roused herself at last and took him, sobbing, into her arms. It had happened so many times since then, in various crises, that he knew she wasn't really having a heart attack. All he had to do was wait until she began to feel foolish lying there; before long she turned over and pulled herself up into a tragic sitting position in the nearest chair, hiding her face in her hands.

"Oh, God," she said, with a convulsive shudder. "Oh, God. My *son* calls me '----.'"

"No, now wait a minute. Listen. I didn't *call* you—you don't *call* people—look, it's just an expression. Don't you see? I just said—— Look, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it. I'm sorry."

"Oh, oh, oh, God," she said, rocking from side to side in her chair. "My *son* calls me '----.'"

"No, look. Wait a minute. Please . . ."

In the end, a week before school started, she took a job—not the "wretched little job in a department store" she had so often threatened George Prentice with, but something

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more wretched even than that: She went to work in a factory that manufactured department-store mannequins.

And the surprising thing was that his senior year turned out to be a kind of success. Through whatever subtle social chemistry it is that turns school outcasts into offbeat school leaders, he became one; and not until the triumphant year was nearly over did he learn that his tuition had gone unpaid for a year and a half.

There were many telephone calls between his mother and the headmaster, during which she probably wept and pleaded and promised, and there were sober talks between the headmaster and himself ("It's a very difficult situation for all of us, Bob") until at last, on the very eve of Commencement Day, the headmaster explained tactfully and with some embarrassment that his diploma would have to be withheld until the debt was paid.

By that time his mother had been fired from the mannequin factory and had gone to work in a small, nonunion defense plant that made precision lenses. She described it, to everyone she knew, as "war work."

A month later he was in the Army, with his mother listed as a Class-A Dependent; and now, sitting across from her in the ample cleanliness of Childs, he was letting her words flow past his hearing. With a grim, tender patience, he had begun to watch for the first signs of her drunkenness to show: the thickening and slurring of her speech, the tendency of her upper lip to loosen and bloat, the slowing clumsiness of her gesturing hands.

"... And then suddenly," she was saying, coming to the climax of a long story about some people she'd recently met, "suddenly his eyes went very big and he said, 'You mean you're Alice Prentice? Alice Prentice the painter?'" She had always taken a child's delight in telling anecdotes that allowed her to speak her own name, and those that allowed her to add "the painter" were much the best. "And it turned out they'd been admirers of mine for years. So they asked me in for coffee and we had—oh, we just had the most wonderful time."

He knew he was supposed to join in her pleasure at this, but he abruptly decided he wasn't up to it tonight. "Oh yeah?" he said. "Well, that's interesting. Where'd they heard of you?" And he was fully aware that the question was cruel, but aware too that he had to ask it just that way.

"What? Oh ——" Hurt feelings flickered in her face, but she recovered. "Oh, well; friends of theirs had bought a painting from one of my exhibitions years ago, or something of the kind. I don't remember exactly. Anyway, they ——"

"Your exhibitions?" He couldn't let it go; he was bearing down on her like a prosecuting attorney. He knew damn well that for all her lifelong talk about one-man shows she'd never had one. (And did they really call it a "one-man show" when the painter was a woman? What kind of nonsense was that?) He knew too that the number of paintings she'd sold from group exhibitions could be counted on pitifully few fingers; most of her sales had been made through a gallery that in truth was primarily a gift shop—and even at that, they had nearly always been bought by friends, or by friends of friends.

"Well, I *think* they said an exhibition," she said impatiently. "It may have been a gallery sale; anyway, that's not important."

He conceded the point, but only to withdraw to a new line of attack: "And how did you say you'd met these people?"

"Through the *Stewarts*, dear; I explained all that."

"Oh, I see. And the Stewarts were probably friends of the other people too, the people who bought the painting. Right?"

"Well, I suppose so, yes. Yes, I suppose that must've been the way it happened." She fell silent for a little while, looking daunted, poking her fork around in the ruins of her chicken croquette. Then, bravely, her voice went to work again and brought the story around to what had apparently been its point from the start. "Anyway, they're awfully nice, and of course I've told them all about you. They're dying to meet you. I told them we might drop by tomorrow after church, if you feel like it. Would you mind doing that, dear? Just to please me? I know you'll like them, and they'll be so disappointed if we don't come."

It was the last thing in the world he wanted to do, but he said yes. And by implication he'd said yes to church, too, which he would also much rather have avoided. He was ready to say yes to anything she wanted now, to atone for the harshness of his questioning. Why had he grilled her like that? She was fifty-five years old and lonely and oppressed; why couldn't he let her have her illusions? That was what her wounded, half-drunken eyes had seemed to be saying throughout his interrogation: Why can't I have my illusions?

Because they're lies, he told her silently in his mind as he champed his jaws and swallowed the cheap food. Everything you say is a lie. You're not Alice Prentice the Painter and you never were, any more than I'm Robert Prentice the Prep-School Graduate. You're a liar and a fake, that's what you are.

He was shocked by the force of his own secret invective but he was carried helplessly along with it, holding his mouth shut tight and allowing his fingers to twist and tear at a raddled paper napkin in his lap.

You're Alice Grumbauer, his soundless voice went on. You're Alice Grumbauer from Plainville, Indiana, and you're ignorant and foolish in spite of all the phony "art" stuff you've been spouting all these years, while my poor slob of a father was breaking his back for us. And maybe he *was* "dull" and "insensitive" and all that, but I wish to God I'd had a chance to know him because, however much of a fool he was, I know damn well he didn't live by lies. And you do. Everything you live by is a lie, and do you want to know what the truth is?

He watched her with murderous distaste as she fumbled with her spoon. They had ordered ice cream, and some of it clung to her lips as she rolled a cold mouthful on her tongue.

Do you want to know what the truth is? The truth is that your fingernails are all broken and black because you're working as a laborer and God knows how we're ever going to get you out of that lens-grinding shop. The truth is that I'm a private in the infantry and I'm probably going to get my *head* blown off. The truth is, I don't really want to be sitting here at all, eating this damn ice cream and letting you talk yourself drunk while all my time runs out. The truth is, I wish I'd taken my pass to Lynchburg today and found a girl. *That's* the truth.

But it wasn't, exactly. He knew it wasn't, even while taking deep breaths to fight back the words that wanted so urgently to burst from him. The real, the whole truth was something far more complicated. Because it couldn't be denied that he'd come to New York of his own free will, and even with a certain heartfelt eagerness. He had come for sanctuary in the very comfort of her "lies"—her groundless optimism, her insistent belief that a special provi-

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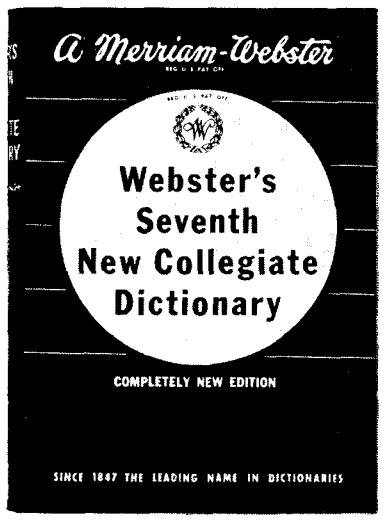
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dence would always shine on brave Alice Prentice and her Bobby, her conviction, held against all possible odds, that both of them were somehow unique and important and could never die. He had *wanted* to be with her tonight: He hadn't even minded her calling him her "big, wonderful soldier." And as for the girl in Lynchburg, he knew deep down that he couldn't blame his mother for his own lack of guts.

"Isn't this good?" Alice Prentice said of her ice cream.

"M'm," said her son, and they finished their meal in silence.

On their way back to the apartment she kept swaying against him—her grip on his arm at each street crossing was a little spasm of panic—and as soon as they were upstairs she poured herself a hefty drink from the bottle of rye she had probably been working on all afternoon.

"Would you like a drink, dear?"

"No, thanks. I'm fine."

"Your bed's all made up, whenever you're ready. I'm so—tired"—she brushed a loose strand of hair away from her brow—"so tired I think I'll just go to bed now, if you don't mind. You're sure you don't mind?"

"No, of course not. You go ahead."

"All right. And tomorrow we'll have a lovely long Sunday together." She came up close, smelling of food and whisky, and raised her arms to give him a kiss. "*Oh*, it's so good to have you here." She clung to him for a moment, and then, swaying, steadying herself against the wall, she blundered into her bedroom and closed the door, which had to be closed several times before it clicked shut in its warped frame.

Strolling alone with his hands in his pockets, he went over to the black window and looked out. Far down the block, where the lights of a bar and grill spilled out across the sidewalk, a couple of soldiers were standing with their arms around a couple of girls. One of the girls was laughing, making high, suggestive little sounds that floated up the street. Then one of the soldiers shouted something that made them all join in her laughter, and they walked away and were lost in the darkness.

He loosened his collar and tie and sat heavily on his bed, which also served as the living-room couch and which exhaled a fine cloud of dust. From the cluttered coffee table he picked up the only thing in the room that looked expensive and new: his school yearbook. Leafing through its heavy, creamy pages, he found a pleasurable little shock in discovering one familiar face after another, slicked up and posing self-consciously for the school photographer, each looking very young and vulnerable compared to Army faces. And there were the autographs:

"Good luck in the service, Bob. It's been great knowing you.—Dave."

"Bob, I know you'll go far in whatever you do. I'll always value your friendship.—Ken."

By the time he'd finished with the yearbook it was hard to remember that he'd waked before dawn this morning to scrub his cartridge belt for inspection, jostled in the stinking latrine by men who told him to get the lead out. It was hard to remember his nine hours on the bus and the train, and he was only dimly and guiltily aware of the cruel, silent rage that had poisoned his dinner at Childs. The deep, slow, sibilant rhythm of his mother's snoring came from the bedroom now, and he listened to it with a feeling of great tenderness as he undressed and carefully arranged his uniform on a wire hanger. Getting into bed, he found that the sheets were surprisingly fresh and clean: He could picture her scurrying to the laundry with them during her lunch hour, in preparation for his coming—or possibly even going to Macy's and buying new ones.

Tomorrow she would wake him late and gently. They would have some kind of messy, inadequate breakfast together, and then they'd go to church. The Episcopal service, which she'd discovered only in the last few years, after a lifetime of paganism, would make her weep. He could hear her say, "I always cry in church, dear; I can't help it; I don't mean to embarrass you." And then, spiritually restored, they would take a subway or a bus somewhere to visit the people who were supposed to be dying to meet him—the people who'd said, "Alice Prentice the *painter?*" and who would probably turn out to be as mild and bewildered and pathetically pleasant as she herself.

The deadly realities would be there to reclaim them both soon enough, on Monday morning—the infantry and the lens-grinding shop—but in the meantime. . .

In the meantime he could drift off to sleep feeling privileged and safe, cradled in peace. He was home. □

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# The biggest watermelon anybody ever saw

**By WILLIAM SAROYAN**

Anybody with a dime in his pocket when everybody else has only a penny or nothing at all is likely to think twice about how to spend it, or what to save it for, or how to behave toward his friends.

The man with the dime in his pocket was Hap Bashmanian, who came slowly to the front lawn of the Korkmazian house at San Benito and M streets where four other boys were sitting and talking about money. Two of them had a penny each, one had two pennies, and one had no coin at all.

"What are you guys talking about?" Hap said.

"Money," Korkmazian's boy Ara said.

"What about money?"

"Whether it is better," Sharkey said, "to save or spend."

"And whether it is better," Reuben Malatian said, "to earn or steal."

Hap had a rather interesting reputation as a stealer, so that Reuben's remark, although earnestly made, amused the others, who discreetly kept their amusement to themselves, while Hap, as expected, pretended that he knew nothing about stealing at all.

"Earn," Hap said. "Earn and the world likes you; steal and the world hates you."

"Sure," Ara said. "But earn and you get tired. Steal and you get *more*, and *don't* get tired."

"Steal what?" Hap said.

"Whatever's around," Reuben said. "A man gets a good eye for what's around to steal, and pretty soon he's got money in his pocket. How much have you got in your pocket, Hap?"

"A dime."

"All I've got is a penny," Reuben said, "which I earned by going on an errand to town for my father. How did you get your dime?"

"Errand for my father, too."

"*One* errand?"

"Five. My father gives me two cents an errand—one cent each way."

"How come your father sent you on so many errands?"

"Five isn't so many."

"To town and back, five times? From your house it's seven blocks each way. You didn't have a dime when we were all on this lawn this morning, so right after lunch you've made a dime from going on

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# "Armenians are artistic, industrious, and thrifty," the teacher had said. Did she mean to suggest they were thieves?

Illustrated by Louis Glanzman

errands for your father. Have you made five round trips to town since this morning?"

"Sure. What's so hard about that?"

"You're not telling the truth," Sharkey said. "Maybe you *haven't* got a dime." Hap showed the dime. "All right, how did you get it?"

"I told you."

"It's a lie."

"Stand up and fight if you're going to call me a liar," Hap said.

"I'm going to sit right here and *not* fight, because every time I fight I get hit in the nose," Sharkey said.

"Take it back, then."

"You're *not* a liar, Hap. Now, how did you get the dime?"

"I found two burlap sacks back of the bakery and sold them for a nickel each to the junk guy over on Railroad Avenue."

"The San Joaquin Bakery?" Reuben said.

"On the loading platform," Hap said.

"Are you sure you didn't *steal* them from *inside* the place when nobody was around?" Sharkey said.

"No, they were on the loading platform. I was on my way to the California Playground. I picked them up. I took them to the junk guy. I sold them."

"What are you going to do with the dime?" Ara Korkmazian said.

"I don't know."

"Let's spend it," Vahan Bazoyan said.

"Why should I spend my dime? You guys spend your money if you want to; I'm going to save mine. I'm going to walk past the loading platform at the San Joaquin Bakery six or seven times a day, and if there's a sack out there or two sacks, or maybe three, I'm going to pick the sacks up and take them straight to the junk guy on Railroad Avenue and sell them for a nickel apiece until I've got a silver dollar."

"Easier said than done," Sharkey said.

"I'll have me a dollar one of these days."

"What are you going to do with the dollar, Hap?"

"Save it."

"Thrift," Ara said, "makes the heart grow fonder."

"Absence," Reuben said. "Not thrift."

"Thrift too," Ara said. "Save money and you grow fonder of money than ever before. The more



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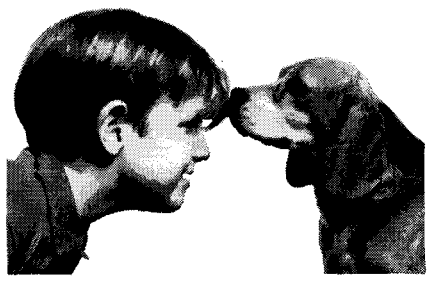

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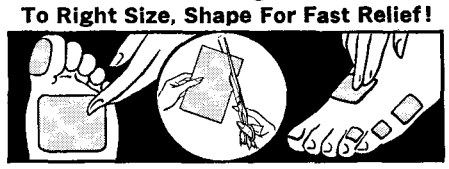

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BIGGEST WATERMELON

money you get, the fonder you get. Hap, you keep stealing those sacks from the San Joaquin Bakery and you're going to be one of the richest nine-year-old boys in the whole city of Fresno."

"I don't steal," Hap said. "I take what people throw away and I sell it to the junk guy on Railroad Avenue."

"You're going to be so rich, you're not going to want to talk to us poor guys any more," Vahan said.

"I'll talk to you guys."

"Easy to say; not easy to do. *We're* friends, but you're *not* a friend," Sharkey said. "A friend with a dime on a hot afternoon in July would go across the street to Eranose's grocery and buy a nice cold watermelon and bring it over to this lawn and cut it up and give us each a big slice."

"You guys put your money together and go and buy a watermelon from old Eranose and give *me* a slice."

"You're not a friend," Ara said. "The rest of us are friends to one another, but you with your dime, you're not a friend, you're just a passerby."

"You're just visiting the poor people," Reuben said.

"You're just visiting the slums, that's all," Sharkey said.

"I want to be rich," Hap said.

"You *are* rich," Reuben said, "and like all rich people you don't care about the poor people."

"I'm not going to buy a watermelon."

"Buy a brick of ice cream, then."

"I'm not going to buy anything. I'm going to keep my money."

"You're a miser."

"Stand up and fight, Reuben."

"It's too hot to fight."

"Take it back, then."

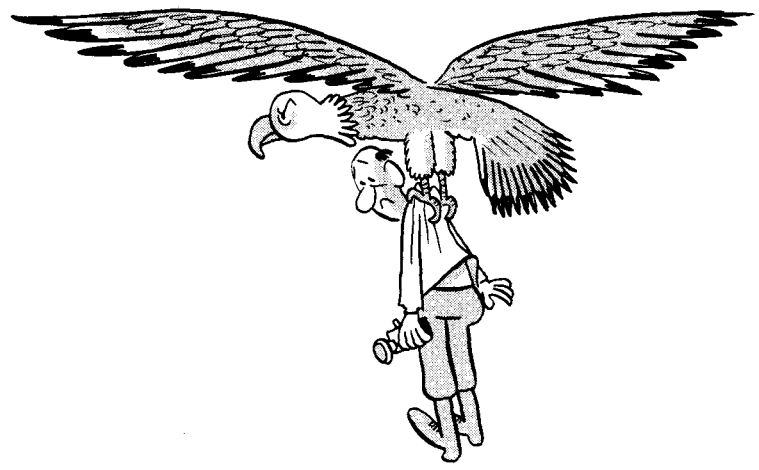
"You're not a miser, Hap, you're just cheap."

"Stand up."

"All right," Reuben said. "You're not cheap, either, so what are you?"

"I'm thrifty. Industrious and thrifty, like Miss Chambers at Emerson School said the Armenian people are."

"*Artistic*, industrious, and thrifty is



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"The camera, Fred! Throw me the camera!"



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what Miss Chambers said," Sharkey said, "because I was there, and she said it to *me*, because she wanted to know how it had happened that I, also an Armenian, *wasn't* artistic, wasn't industrious, wasn't thrifty. Well, it just happens that she doesn't know that the Armenians are also funny, they know how to have fun, how to make comedy, how to tell funny stories, how to say funny things. I'd rather be funny than rich."

"I'd rather be rich than funny," Hap said.

"You *will* be rich," Sharkey said. "But whether you like it or not, Hap, you are always going to be funny too. You don't even have to try. You're funny when you don't mean to be. You're funny and don't even know it."

"Get up and fight," Hap said.

"Ah, come on, I take it back. I take it *all* back. You always want to fight."

"Honor," Hap said, "is more important to the Bashmanians than anything else."

"Except money," Ara said, "and I take it back too. We were having a nice time here, being poor and talking, so you come up with your dime and spoil everything. Hap, just try to remember this is 1919. The war's over."

"What's the meaning of that crack?"

"Live and let live is the policy all over the world now. Don't flaunt your wealth."

"I'm not flaunting it."

"Yes, you *are* flaunting it."

"I'm keeping it."

"That's the worst kind of flaunting there is, Hap. It's very rude."

"I came up here," Hap said, "and you guys asked me how much money I've got in my pocket, and I told you—a dime. And ever since, you've been trying to get me to buy a watermelon from Eranose. If you really want a watermelon, why don't we all take a walk to the San Joaquin Bakery and see if there are any sacks on the loading platform; and if there are, the junk guy on Railroad Avenue will give us a nickel each, and then we can come back and buy the watermelon and eat it."

"*All* of us take a walk?" Sharkey said.

"Sure. All of us are going to eat the watermelon. Come on. By now maybe they've thrown away two more sacks—maybe three or four, even."

There were no sacks on the loading platform, but just beyond the sliding door there was a bundle of them, held together by wire, and nobody around. Hap jumped up onto the platform, lifted the bundle, tossed it to the group, Sharkey caught it, and everybody began to run toward the California Playground. They kept running until they reached Levy-Zentner's Produce, where they tugged the sacks free from the wire and counted them.

"Twenty-five," Hap said. "Five sacks each. Twenty-five cents each."

"You and I did all the work," Sharkey said. "Why should we cut *them* in?"

"We're all in this together—this good luck of finding twenty-five sacks," Hap said.

Each of them presented five sacks to the junk guy on Railroad Avenue, and he handed each of them a quarter. Then they went back to the cool and shaded front lawn of the Korkmazian house at San Benito and M streets and stretched out to rest a minute. At last Hap said, "Well, who's going to buy the watermelon from Eranose?"

Almost in one voice, each of them said, "I will." But it was Ara Korkmazian who simply got up and went across the street to the little store. The watermelon he brought back was delicious, but while they were eating it Sharkey said something funny about seeds that made them all start to laugh as if they were laughing for the first time in their lives, and it seemed as if they couldn't stop. They didn't stop until Ara's mother came out on the porch and looked at them. She just looked. Then, they stopped.

"Ara," Hap said, "what's your mother mad about?"

"Me, I guess." He got up and started walking across the street again.

"Where you going?" Reuben said.

"I'm going to buy another watermelon. The *biggest* one he's got—for *fifteen* cents."

"What for?" Sharkey said. "Why should *you* buy all the watermelons—spend all *your* money?"

But Ara was gone, and he soon came back with the biggest Klondike watermelon anybody ever saw. They cut it and ate it, and then Hap said, "Ara, it wasn't your turn to buy the second watermelon. What did you do it for?"

"I felt like it."

"Why?"

"I don't know. I just felt like it."

But everybody knew that he had spent all of his money because he hadn't wanted to have that kind of money in his pocket. Hap Bashmanian rather admired him, but he thought, "He'll never be a millionaire." □


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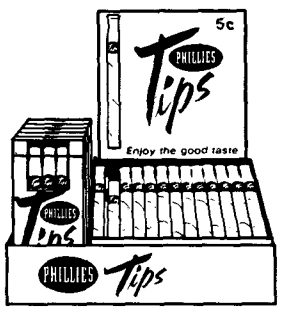


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BY MAX GUNTHER

# We've got to call it something

DRAWING BY BILL CHARMATZ

Back in the 1940's, chemists at Armour & Co. invented a new deodorant soap. But soon many people in the company wished the chemists hadn't. The problem was what to name the soap. At first it looked easy, and everybody had suggestions. A chemist wanted to call it Nodor. Skindew, offered a marketing executive. A committee of sales and advertising men decided on one they liked, and turned it over to company lawyers for legal clearance.

This is where the trouble started. The lawyers, combing through trademark registration files of the U.S. Patent Office and various state bureaus, found that a similar name was already being used by another company. If Armour used it, costly lawsuits and other trouble would surely ensue.

The name hunters came up with a second candidate, and this one, too, was rejected. So was a third, and a fourth. Altogether, 37 beautiful names died in the lawyers' offices.

A year passed, and the sales and advertising departments were desperate. And then one morning, an executive happened to glance at some telephones on a desk. "Let's call it 'Dial,'" he said. "Hell, we've got to call it *something*."

The lawyers approved, and Dial soap was born. Subsequently an artist designing the wrapper hit upon the phrase "'Round the Clock Protection," and they all lived happily ever after.

But the fact that Armour's story had a happy ending doesn't show that this is the right way to pick a name—not in the 1960's, anyway. Modern namers would be horrified at Armour's rather casual, nonsystematized approach, and at the final act of clutching at a straw. Today, new product names like Chrysler's Valiant, Du Pont's Corfam, Cities Service's Citgo grow out of meticulously planned campaigns involving computers, psychological tests, opinion surveys and other sciencelike procedures. The choice of a name is no longer left to flashes of inspiration.

The "Dial" hunt itself took place in a transitional period in naming, when the really casual days were already gone. One Sunday morning back in 1879, for instance, Harley Procter heard a minister say something about ivory palaces and nonchalantly coined Ivory Soap. By the 1940's, namers were realizing that a wrong name could badly hurt a product in the market, and since then worry about names has become a fairly generalized business neurosis.

Cities Service Oil Co., for example, suffered such anxieties about its old name that it is spending $20 million redecorating gas stations, attendants'



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*Picking a name for the new gadget, or for the company, is a major business problem and a business in itself. A fortune can hang on a single letter, and even the computer may stumble over some treacherous hidden meaning.*

uniforms, trucks and other equipment with the new, scientifically hunted "Citgo," which it introduced in May. The old name, Cities Service, didn't seem "exciting or eye-catching enough for today's high-speed highways," and surveys showed that many people thought the company was a public utility whose gas-station products were some kind of sideline. Goaded by similar concerns, some 100 major U.S. companies have changed their corporate names in the last five years.

Name-hunting, in fact, has become virtually a profession in itself. Audits & Surveys Co., a New York market research firm, this year set up a Brand Name Store Search division whose operatives roam 5,000 retail stores hunting for names that are similar to or might otherwise get in the way of product names being considered by its clients. Lippincott & Margulies, a New York industrial-design firm, has a subsidiary called Names, Inc., which has helped Ohio Oil to change its name to Marathon Oil, American Steel Foundries to become Amsted Industries and Monsanto Chemical to drop "Chemical." It has developed names like Carlton (high-toned sound) and Montclair (cool, soft sound) for cigarettes. Executives of a naming firm may spend hours bandying one word about the conference table, or soberly pecking out syllables on a typewriter to find something that says "power" or "lightness" or whatever the client has in mind.

There are more than 300,000 trademarks registered with the U.S. Patent Office, at least that many more registered with state bureaus and, according to the U.S. Trademark Association, there are probably a million more that aren't registered but could lead to lawsuits if copied. New names are added to the list at a faster rate each year.

"It is getting harder and harder to find a good name," says Walter Margulies, founder of Names, Inc. "Every year more products hit the market which are basically similar to other products already there—cigarettes, soap flakes, cars. A name may be the main characteristic that gives a product its individuality." (Not long ago, the Johnson's Wax people tested a group of consumers and asked, out of curiosity, what they thought of "Johnson's Wax shoe polish." The consumers thought it a very fine product—so much so that the firm later decided actually to *make* a Johnson's Wax shoe polish.)

This is one reason why companies seek professional naming help. Another is the danger of hidden meanings, which apparently lurk everywhere in this psychoanalytic age. "A hidden nuance in a name can do a lot of damage," says Dr. Ernest Dichter, president of the Institute for Motivational Research. The American Sheep Producers' Council hired him recently to invent another name for "lamb," on the grounds that "lamb" has overtones of religion, cuddly pets and other nuances which may disturb some people's appetites (Dr. Dichter has yet to report back).

In pursuing the search that produced the name Corfam for its new shoe material, Du Pont ran tests on scores of coined words, asking people what the words made them think of. All turned out to have nuances. One name called up images of Tarzan; another suggested Zsa Zsa Gabor; others hinted at a flat beer, a funeral parlor and the center of a golf ball. (Du Pont won't say what they were, since it may one day need a name for a Tarzan-like swimsuit fiber or a new kind of golf ball.) "Corfam" had the fewest stray connotations.

Similar problems arise with company names. A few years ago an opinion researcher named James Vicary made surveys to find what people read into various corporate names. He found that names beginning with "American," "National" or "U.S." are relatively clean of nuances, but there are so many that they confuse people. "Federal" makes people think of a government agency and may arouse hostile feelings. "Amalgamated" and "Affiliated" suggest unions and can also make some people grumpy.

A name that may be fine in America can be grotesque in another country. *Hague's Trademark Thesaurus* tells of an American toothpaste called Bestol, which was exported to Brazil with embarrassing results. To Brazilians the name translated as "Jackass Oil."

All these problems have made the name game a cause of gastric ulcers. "Sometimes," admits Margulies of Names, "a businessman may wish he were back in the days of the midnight inspiration." Back then, George Eastman coined the name Kodak because he liked K's, and wives of executives effortlessly thought up such smash successes as Jell-O and Wheaties.

Early namers seemingly did not brood about connotations. A cigar named Mayer Rat Tail would set off tremors in a modern ad agency, but a smoke by that name was successfully marketed in the U.S. a century ago.

"I don't know," sighs an ad-agency man, "maybe the country has lost its sense of humor. We worry about little things too much today."

For reasons which have nothing to do with humor, Du Pont is one of many companies which insist on "nonsense" words for product names, and rely on computers to find them. Du Pont reasons that a nonsense word is likely to have fewer connotations than a word people have seen, and is less likely to be registered as someone else's trademark.

To make a computer create names, you give it basic rules on what combinations of letters can and cannot be pronounced, plus instructions about the length and other characteristics you want. That is how Names, Inc., found "Citgo" for Cities Service. Names, Inc., believed the name should start with the letters "CI" to indicate its ancestry. Cities Service wanted a short name that would be easy to write large on signs. The namers further decided against J's, Q's, X's, or Z's in the name, mainly to avoid pronunciation difficulties.

The computer was started on four-letter words, with instructions to make all possible combinations except C-I-vowel-vowel. Out came 448 names like Ciuk and Cied. Tackling five-letter words, the computer was told to skip names that had a vowel right after the CI, since these were hard to pronounce. It coined 3,648 names such as Cilly. Among them was Citgo, but nobody envisioned it in neon at the time, so the computer went on to six-letter words. It coined 76,800 of these.

The next step, of course, has to be a reduction of the list by humans. Chrysler's quest for a name for a new 1960 car illustrates the earnestness of the hunt. For three years, while the car was going by the name A-109, suggestions piled up from secretaries, lawyers, admen and others—including a computer. The list of thousands was pared to 20. Five survived a trademark search: Chelsea, Columbia, Liberty, Revere and Valiant.

Out went interviewing teams. They talked to people in all parts of the nation, asking them what they thought of the five names. Which seemed like a *car* name? Which, attached to a car, would make the owner proudest? According to Chrysler, the name Valiant won "conclusively." This short word turned out to be a cornucopia of lovely nuances: "an American-made family car, amply proportioned, smartly designed, safe, stable, comfortable." The name, says Chrysler, also conveyed "the prestige price class . . . a name people like to say, like the sound of."

The picking of a name only begins the battle, however. From then on, the company must protect it—from other companies that may try to use it and, above all, from the public, which may try to make an ordinary, lowercase, generic word out of it. A form letter familiar to newspaper editors is one from the Coca-Cola company, politely pointing out that "coke" shouldn't be used without a capital. The Kaiser Jeep Corp. distributes a pamphlet telling editors there is no such thing as a jeep.

A product name "goes generic" when the public starts to use it as a word to describe that general class of products. It gets lowercased in newspapers and magazines, and eventually in dictionaries. Finally a competing manufacturer can go to a court and say, "Look, this is a public word now. I should be allowed to use it on *my* product." If the word does indeed seem to be generic, the court will decree that, from now on, it's a public word that anybody may use in any way he likes.

This happened to the Bayer Company in 1921, for instance. From that year on, "Aspirin" was officially demoted to "aspirin," everybody's property. In the same way Du Pont lost "Cellophane," the Haughton Elevator Co. lost "Escalator" and American Thermos Products Co. in 1962 saw its product name officially become "thermos."

"To keep this from happening, we've got to construct the name properly," says William Dana, attorney in Corning Glass Works' patent department. "The name must be fanciful. That is, it should not describe the product." If Corning used "transparent" in a name for a glass product, for instance, it would be inviting trouble, since this is a word any glassmaker might reasonably want to use in his advertising (the Kellogg Co. lost "Corn Flakes" largely for this reason). Adulterated forms like "Glasso" or "Transparo" are also risky. Corning thus goes to great lengths to develop names like Pyrex and Centura.

Namers everywhere uttered howls of protest when *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* was published in 1961. Only one word in it was capitalized: God. Several hundred lovingly protected product names were lowercased, among them dacron, kleenex and jeep. The Dictionary Listings Committee of the U.S. Trademark Association had an earnest talk with the publishers, and the second printing shows the spellings as Dacron, Kleenex and Jeep.

"It wasn't that we thought our name deserved the same reverence as God," a member of the Brand Names Foundation explained humbly. "But it's hard work these days to establish a good name. When I saw all those names spelled like ordinary words, I felt . . . I felt. . . ." But the emotion was so intense that he couldn't put a name to it. □



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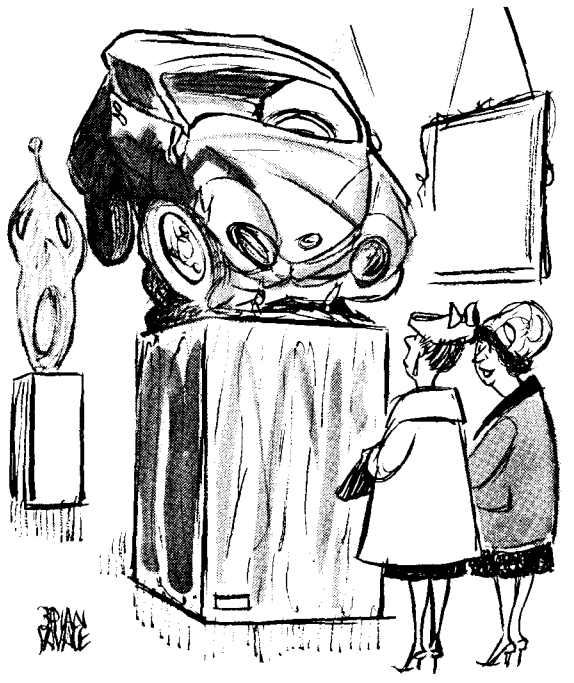
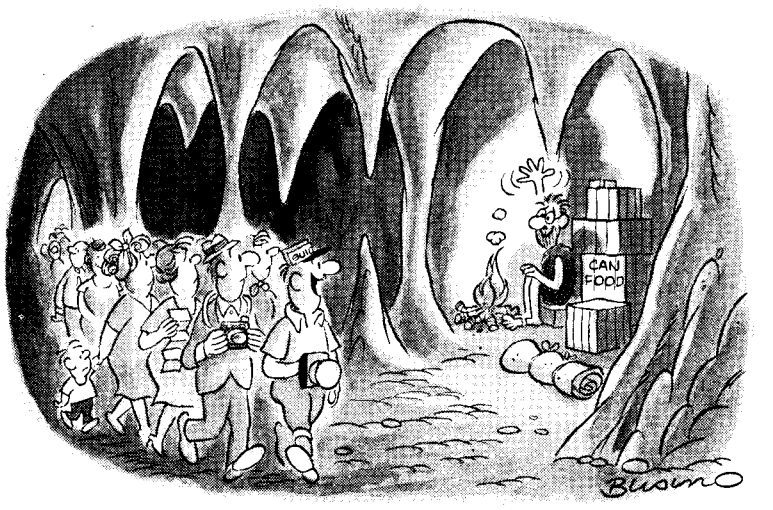
# Post scripts

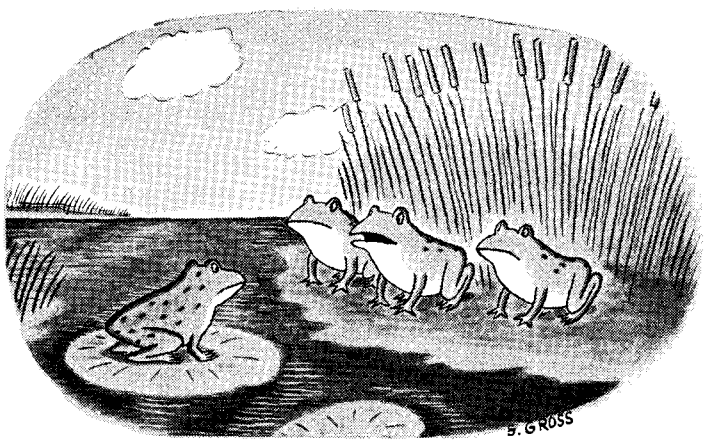


*"I could do better than that with one hand tied behind my back."*

*"You'll love this new cereal for children. It drains the energy right out of them!"*

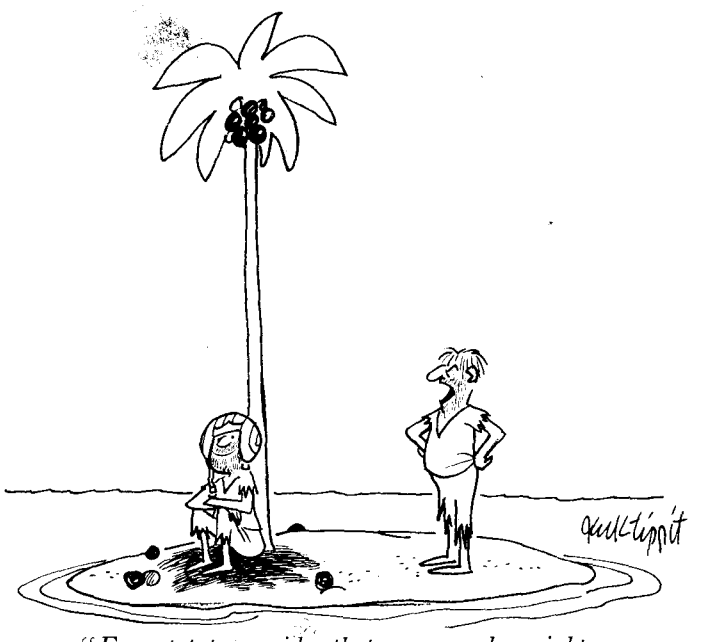



*"And this next cavern—Hi, Mr. Thorson, still no war—is noted for . . ."*




*"We're an enchanted three-man revolutionary council."*

*"Boy, have I had a day!"*



*"Ever stop to consider that someone else might like to wear the helmet and enjoy some shade?"*

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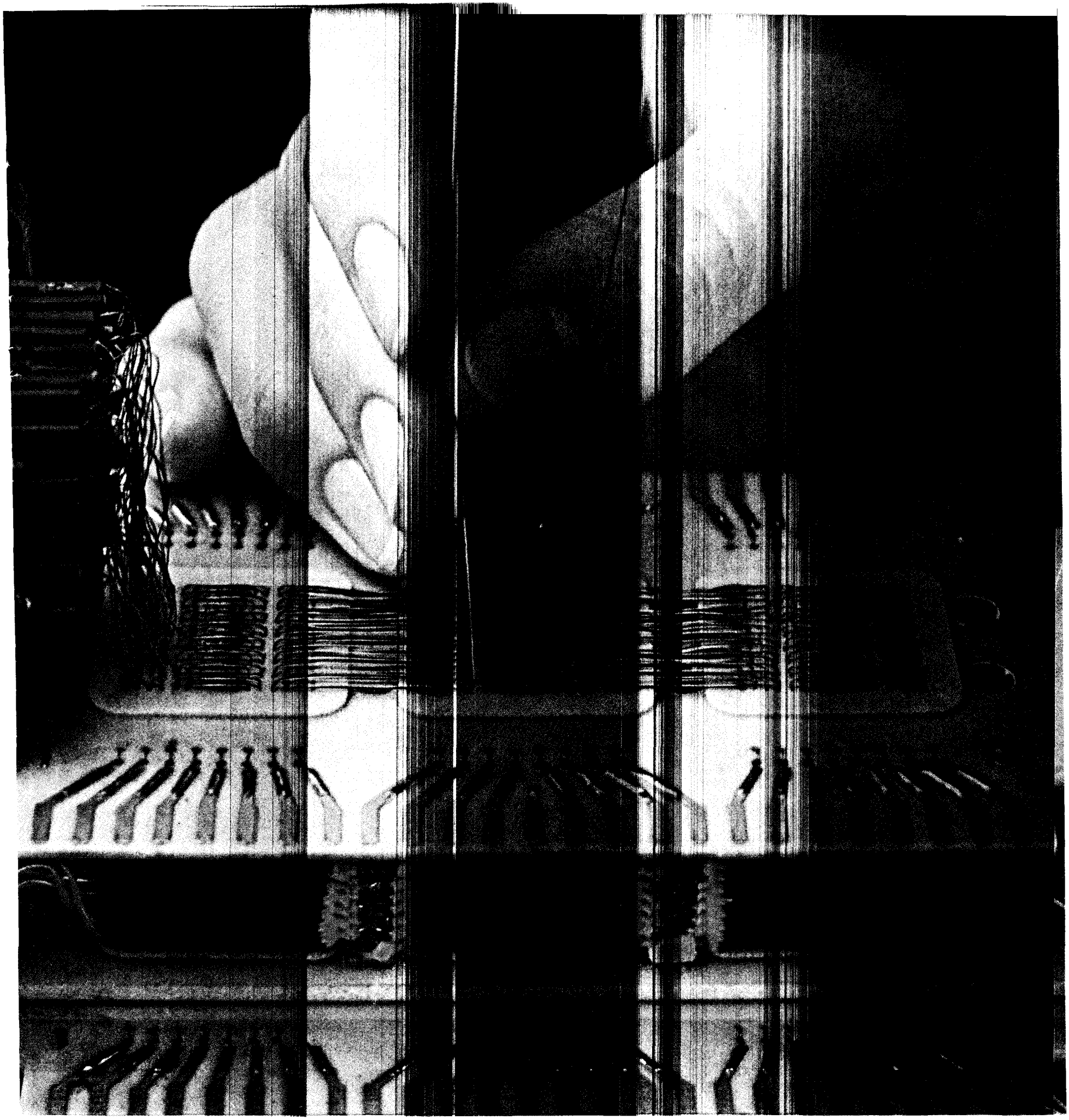

# We're 'weaving' tomorrow's phone service

Many people think that Western Electric's main job is to make Bell telephones.

But we spend much more time making the things behind your telephone — like the electronic memory device shown above. It is part of an amazing new Electronic Switching System we are currently building for use in the Bell System nationwide communications network.

It may seem strange that in the modern world of electronics things are still made by hand. But consider the task: more than a thousand feet of fine wire must be threaded through 62,208 holes to complete just one of these memory units.

While this careful "weaving" is going on, marvelous machines are making other electronic devices for electronic switching. One example: complete circuits are automatically fabricated inside a machine that approximates the vacuum found in outer space.

The point is this: it is our job, in manufacturing new communications products for the Bell System, to find the best way to make them to the highest standards of quality. At the same time we must keep the costs down. And once a process is perfected, we must develop and install highly efficient production lines to make these new products in sufficient quantities to meet growing nationwide communications needs.

In a nutshell, this is one way we join your Bell telephone company in bringing you the world's finest communications at low cost.

Western Electric
MANUFACTURING & SUPPLY UNIT OF THE BELL SYSTEM

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# Diamonds bespeak an ever-growing love

"I bring you all the love that you can wish."
In the endless radiance of the diamond shines a message of love.
No other gift fills a woman with deeper joy than the diamond jewel that you have chosen to acknowledge an occasion in your married life.
The diamond's beauty is unchangeable.
Like love, it grows more precious with each passing year.

De Beers Consolidated Mines, Ltd.

Ring, about $600; rose pin, about $1400; earrings, about $230; bracelet, about $3000. Your jeweler can show you many such pieces.

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# Who is Lyndon Johnson?

*Continued from page 25*

*Arnold Roth, in this drawing for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, presents President Johnson in the guise of a Lyndon Bird.*

OF LBJ, the buses turned abruptly to the right, jouncing down a narrow dirt road and over a concrete bridge. This was the crossing of the Pedernales River, which is not much wider than a large creek. Beyond the river the road led up a low hill, past a group of cattle resting under the shade trees, into the yard of the LBJ Ranch.

On the lawn in front of the house the ubiquitous movie cameras, klieg lights and tape recorders had been arranged in a semicircle. Just outside the front door, the rostrum stood between the customary two flags. The building is small and unpretentious, resembling a modest ranch house in a moderately expensive suburb. The façade is fieldstone, the main structure is white clapboard. The principal rooms overlook the Pedernales River, about 150 yards away. Except for green sheds erected by the Signal Corps and helicopters on the airstrip behind the house, nothing suggests the office of the Presidency.

Mr. Johnson, followed by his wife in a summer dress, walked out of the front door as soon as everybody had settled on the wooden benches and chairs set up under the live oak trees. He wore a gabardine coat, a khaki shirt and khaki pants. For 15 minutes he spoke about the war in Vietnam, his words falling into the familiar litany of strange and hard-to-pronounce names. "I regret the necessities of war," he said, ". . . compelled us to bomb North Vietnam . . . the infiltration continues . . . the terror continues . . . death in the night continues . . . we must also continue. . . ."

In that pleasant place the meaning of his words seemed even more abstract than on television. As he talked, the sparrows cheeped and wheedled in the trees; the soft wind brought the smell of turned earth. Off to the west the river ran placidly between its banks, the tall grass bright with a spill of blue and yellow wildflowers.

When he had finished speaking, Mr. Johnson leaned down and put his arm around his wife's shoulders, kissing her lightly on the forehead. She squeezed her hands together in a small gesture of congratulation, like a woman watching her husband pitch the final inning of a softball game at a factory picnic. Smiling at the cameras, they waved in a shy, almost tentative way, and then turned back into the house.

That evening a notice on the bulletin board in the Maximilian Room advised that President and Mrs. Johnson would attend Easter services the next morning at St. Michael and All Angels, an Episcopal church in Blanco, Tex. The notice was interpreted as an obligatory invitation. Reporters live in fear of missing something; thus, if one goes, all must go.

*The mood of the President can swing from backslapper to knuckle-rapper.*

Blanco is another crossroads 25 miles south of the President's ranch. The church, a simple, L-shaped building of fieldstone and redwood, stands under a clump of trees at the end of a dusty road. About 25 of the town's 789 inhabitants, all of them dressed in their best Sunday clothes, waited in the road for the arrival of President Johnson.

Mr. Johnson drove up in a white Lincoln Continental. He wore a cowboy hat and dark glasses. Mrs. Johnson sat on the seat next to him; the beagle, Him, rode in the back with Marvin Watson and a Secret Service agent.

For the text of his sermon, the preacher, a tall and heavy man, remarkably similar in appearance to Mr. Johnson, chose a passage from Isaiah, the book of the Old Testament the President most admires. He phrased his sermon in language he knew the President would find appropriate, speaking of the crucifixion as "a job well done."

Upon leaving the church Mr. Johnson drove off to visit an old friend in a nursing home on the outskirts of Blanco. He went with an escort of two official cars (both carrying Secret Service agents) and an unofficial retinue of another 50 cars (the reporters). At the nursing home the reporters parked along the length of a narrow road, prevented from coming too close by a circle of Secret Service agents. When he had finished talking to his friend, Mr. Johnson, instead of driving on in the same direction, turned around and slowly passed along the line of press cars, smiling and beckoning with his left forefinger for all to follow.

This the reporters did, wrenching their cars around in the small space and yelling at one another. The President's gesture indicated that he wished to play his Sunday game of automobiles. The rules of the game forbid one car to pass another once the sequence has been established on the open road. The experienced players therefore jockeyed desperately for positions close to the head of the line. Sometimes, the other reporters later explained, the game ended happily with a barbecue at the ranch; usually, however, it ended with nothing, but that was another of those things they had to accept.

Picking his way along a series of back roads and trailing a high cloud of dust, the President first returned to the town of Blanco. To continue to Johnson City he had only to make a simple right turn at the main intersection, but instead he turned left and drove slowly, in a full circle, around the town square. The resulting confusion was extensive. Some of the cars got halfway around the square before guessing the President's intention. Others stopped short. Some, at the end of the line, turned left and passed Mr. Johnson's car in an opposite direction.

All players again maneuvered for position, and their collective trickiness resulted in a stalemate; all cars stopped, the drivers beating helplessly on their dashboards in frustration and rage. The President meanwhile drove serenely back onto the highway, smiling and waving at those he recognized.

Once back on the main road to Johnson City the procession assumed a more or less orderly aspect, everybody following at high speed through all traffic lights and stop signs. The second Secret Service car remained about 200 yards behind the President, keeping the pack at a respectful distance. A number of other cars entered the chase in a spirit of fun. The procession thus grew larger as it moved north.

Just south of Johnson City the President turned off the highway and stopped in front of a rail fence. All the following cars also stopped. The drivers, leaving their engines running and their doors open, ran forward to try to overhear what the President might say. When enough people had gathered around him, Mr. Johnson observed that it was a pleasant day. He then got back into his car and drove on. All the others, like drivers at the start of the Le Mans race, ran toward their cars, colliding with reporters running forward from the end of the line.

The President next stopped in front of his boyhood home, a white frame building on the south side of Johnson City. The reporters obediently played the same scene as before. This time, however, Mr. Johnson let everyone catch up to him. He wandered aimlessly through the house and around the lawn under the shade trees. The reporters watched from the far side of the rail fence. As Mr. Johnson passed among them, smiling behind his dark glasses, a woman said to him:

"Happy Easter, Mr. President."

"Happy Easter, my dear," Mr. Johnson said. "I hope you're all havin' a good time."

The game ended when Mr. Johnson grew bored. Leaving Johnson City the President's car again headed north. All pressed on at increased speed. After about 10 miles, however, the cars pulled up at a roadside barbecue stand. The Secret Service agents greeted everybody with laughter. The President's car apparently had turned off the highway about seven miles back, but the



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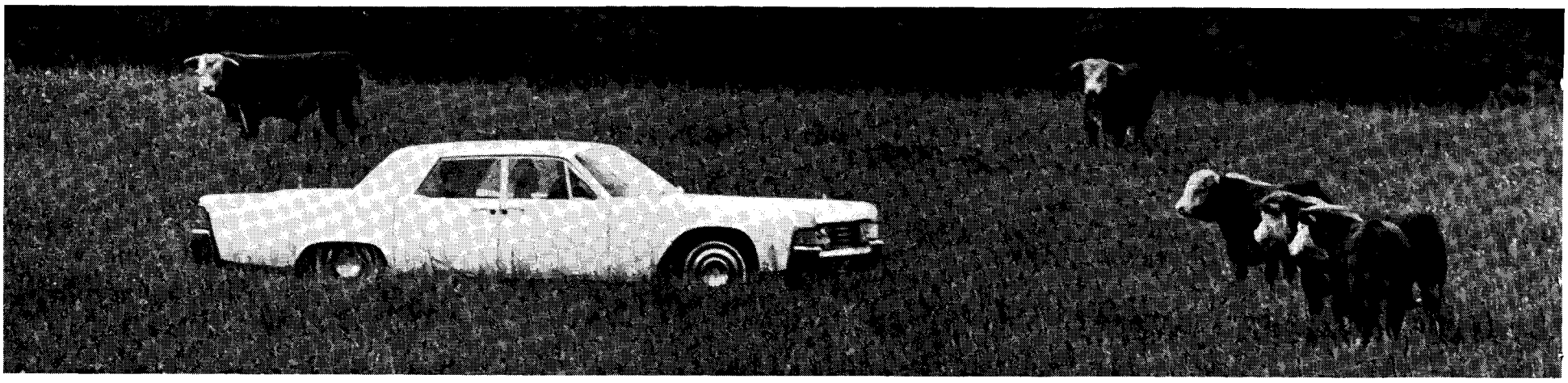

*Observers are often baffled by Mr. Johnson's practice of driving his Lincoln about his Texas ranch and honking at cattle with a cowhorn.*



second Secret Service car (which resembled the President's car) had led the pack off on a false scent.

The barbecue stand was loud with the noise of complaining voices.

"A fine way to treat grown men," somebody said.

"A disgrace, a game for children," said somebody else.

By then it was already two; Reedy's afternoon briefing had been scheduled for an hour later. Everybody drank a few hurried beers and then got into cars to drive at high speed the 70 miles to Austin. On the bulletin board in the Maximilian Room a notice stated that the briefing had been postponed until four that afternoon.

The President returned to Washington the next day, his identity as unclear to me as before. From a safe distance I had seen a proud and imperious man conducting himself with the rough magnificence of a feudal lord. I didn't see him again until Tuesday evening, at a state dinner in honor of Aldo Moro, the prime minister of Italy.

The press had been invited to appear after dinner to hear the speeches and report the society news. At 10 the few reporters who did trouble to come, most of them women in evening dresses, presented themselves in the lobby of the east wing and were conducted by one of Mrs. Johnson's press secretaries into the Blue Room on the first floor of the White House. There they were handed a sheaf of news releases that not only listed the names of the guests but also described the menu ("Pompano Moro and Roast Sirloin White House"), Mrs. Johnson's dress ("a white peau de soie gown with a bodice of white bugle and crystal beads"), and the presents from Mr. and Mrs. Johnson to the Moro children ("authentic Texas cowboy suit for son Giovanni, age seven, who likes cowboys; Polaroid camera in case for daughter Agnese, age thirteen, who likes photography; five albums of American folk music for daughter Anna, age fifteen, who likes music, and a blue nylon sleeping bag for daughter Maria Fida, age seventeen, who likes camping").

The guests were still seated at tables in the State Dining Room (at the west end of the main corridor, opposite the East Room), and in the Entrance Hall the Marine Band played musical-comedy tunes. The architecture and furnishing of the White House, reflecting a genteel 19th-century taste, is eminently appropriate to formal occasions, as if the rooms needed guests in evening clothes to show to best advantage.

Johnson's formal toast at the end of the dinner was broadcast through loudspeakers. He began with a gracious compliment borrowed from Mark Twain ("Say that the Creator made Italy from designs by Michael Angelo"), but he soon proceeded to talk about the war in Vietnam: "The people in that little country," he said, "the right of other people to decide for themselves . . . we believe those people will choose liberty and peace . . . the independence of other nations who want so much what we already have." I later came to recognize these phrases as constants appearing in many of Mr. Johnson's statements. He spoke often of the "little fellas" or "little folks" living in "little lands" who "want what we already have."

Prime Minister Moro answered in Italian, his speech interrupted every few hundred words for the translation. Although his country had publicly supported the United States in Vietnam, the Prime Minister avoided the subject of foreign policy, contenting himself with polite expressions of mutual understanding and goodwill. After dinner the guests drifted toward the East Room, accepting brandy and coffee from Negro waiters dressed in livery.

In the East Room, Mrs. Johnson introduced Leontyne Price, the opera singer, as "a glory to this house and this country." The lights dimmed, and Miss Price sang a group of songs (arias by Handel and Puccini, a tune by Gershwin and a Negro spiritual). When the applause subsided Mr. Johnson presented her with a medal, snatching off his glasses as he noticed the photographers preparing to take pictures.

Everybody then moved into the Entrance Hall where the President began the dancing with Miss Price. The Marine Band played *Arrivederci Roma*. Only a few of the guests danced, and then in a perfunctory manner. For the most part they chose to wander through the public rooms, admiring the paintings by early American artists and making polite conversation. Lynda Bird Johnson, awkward and shy, like any other girl allowed to come downstairs to her parents' dance, stood holding a glass of orange juice and talking to a young soldier in dress uniform. These young men, all of them handsome despite their severe military haircuts, serve as ushers on ceremonious occasions at the White House, a duty for which they receive additional pay; they are expected to dance with any female guests who appear to be lost or timid or deserted.

The President danced with a number of women, some of whom he recognized and some of whom he did not. Sometimes he talked to them and sometimes he stared off over their heads, his expression politely blank. Through all of it, no matter what the music, Mr. Johnson employed the same pragmatic tempo, one which allowed him to maneuver around the dance floor and occasionally to shake hands with somebody behind his partner's back. The social chatter bored him, but if he heard a name that interested him he would put on his glasses and abruptly raise his head. Near the end of the party, excusing himself to dance with a blond reporter, the President remarked to his wife, "Stay put, woman, I'll want to dance with you later."

He left the Entrance Hall with Mrs. Johnson at 11:30 P.M., followed at a discreet distance by Jack Valenti. The other guests left shortly thereafter. Watching them depart, the reporter who had danced with the President looked admiringly at the expensive evening dresses worn by many of the women.

"They're like fireflies," she said. "They sparkle brightly for a few years and then fade away."

If until then I had seen the more or less public image of the President, I was soon to see a more private image. Soon after the dance for Mr. Moro, the trouble started in the Dominican Republic. During the first few days of the crisis Mr. Johnson chose to confide in the press, conducting the reporters on long walks around the south lawn and talking to them incessantly of war and politics and peace. He talked so much that by the end of the week his voice had sunk to a hoarse whisper.

Only much later, and in the light of subsequent events, did I suspect that these confidences were also contrived, that even when Mr. Johnson seemed to reveal the innermost workings of his mind, he was, in fact, only presenting another image. It was as if he knew that when he addressed the American people he failed to convince them, failed, despite his lists of statistics and his record in Congress, to move them. He thus hoped to persuade the reporters to act as his agents, knowing that even when he spoke off the record they would tell everything they had heard. If they would argue his cause, then he would have accomplished the last, impossible trick of which performers everywhere dream, like the juggler who wants to make the balls stand still in the air.

The Dominican crisis became public property in Washington on Wednesday, April 28. At 8:51 P.M. the President read a brief statement into the television cameras set up in the theater in the White House basement. He said he had ordered 405 marines into the Dominican Republic to protect American lives and to escort American citizens safely out of the country. There was no mention of what the papers later would call "the Communist angle."

On Thursday another 2,500 troops landed in Santo Domingo, and at a hastily convened meeting in Washington the delegates to the Organization of American States rose one after another to denounce the American Government for its high-handed action. Despite newspaper stories hinting at Communist plots, the White House (in the person of George Reedy) steadfastly denied any such motive behind the decision to send troops.

On Friday afternoon, Reedy, who continued to deny rumors of a Communist plot, appeared in the lobby and asked if anybody wanted to go for a walk. Between 30 and 40 reporters followed him to the door of the President's office. Reedy listened, at the door, which was slightly ajar, until he heard that Mr. Johnson was off the telephone. He then conducted everybody into the Rose Garden.

The President stood holding his beagle on a chain. It was a lovely spring day; the sky clear and blue and not a stir of wind. The last petals still clung to the cherry trees beyond the box hedges at the edge of the garden.

The walk began in silence, the only sound for the first hundred yards being that of the reporters' shuffling feet on the surfaced roadway that runs in a wide oval around the south lawn. The photographers backed up in front of the President, hastily shooting film; the reporters crowded behind, stumbling against one another in their efforts to get close to the President. From a distance the spectacle must have resembled a swarm of bees around a hive.

Just as he reached the tennis court, at the first curve in the roadway, the President began to talk, beginning abruptly in the middle of a sentence, as if to continue a thought already forming in his mind.

"They're killin' people," he said. "They have no law and no order and no government . . . bullets comin' through the window of our embassy . . . our ambassador under the desk . . . I mean, it was that kind of situation."



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Pausing beside a pickup truck loaded with garden tools and potted geraniums, the President noticed a reporter scribbling notes. He glared at the man, pointing impatiently with his hand.

"If you fellas are goin' on a walk with me," he said, "then you put away your notebooks. You hurt us all with those things you write."

The rest of his remarks remained off the record. On the second turn around the lawn he veered unexpectedly to his right and out through the southeast gate. Earlier in the day he had telephoned Henry Fowler, the Secretary of the Treasury, to arrange a talk, but he had kept the appointment a secret. This also proved to be one of Mr. Johnson's characteristics. He enjoys surprises, but becomes sulky if these are discovered before the proper time.

Followed by the startled reporters and Secret Service agents, he walked quickly across the street to the Treasury Building. The reporters, at first hesitant about entering the building, eventually caught up with the President on the third floor, chasing through the wide corridor like so many *paparazzi* in pursuit of an Italian movie idol. Astonished secretaries also flocked through the hall, asking which way the President went and at last gathering at the door of Mr. Fowler's office.

Leaving the office, Mr. Johnson stopped to shake hands with as many people as he could reach. A woman in a plaid dress stood transfixed, her eyes as round as butter plates, unable to move or utter a sound. Of an old Negro, a janitor, the President asked how long he had been in Washington.

"Since 1937, suh," the man said.

"I've been around longer," Mr. Johnson said. "I got you beat."

Mr. Fowler introduced him to an assistant secretary who had accomplished economies in the budget. The President warmly embraced the man and shouted for the photographers. "Here," he said, "I want to get a picture of this fella; he saved us sixty-six million dollars."

By the time Mr. Johnson left the building, a crowd had gathered in the street. Teen-age girls screamed with excitement; traffic had come to a stop. Walking among the stalled cars, the President reached in to shake hands with the drivers. As he passed back through the southeast gate, he shook hands with more people, among them a Negro who stood looking at his own hand as if it were new to him.

"I'll never forget this day as long as I live," he said, to nobody in particular. "Hot damn . . . I'm ready to die now, yessir, I shook the President's hand."

That evening at seven, Mr. Johnson interrupted the regular news broadcasts to read another statement about the situation in the Dominican Republic. On his way to the White House theater he walked through a patio decorated for a dance that his daughter Luci was giving that night for her friends at the National Cathedral School. The small tables had been set with candles and fresh flowers. Valenti, who preceded Mr. Johnson into the theater, brushed a thread off the President's coat before he began to speak into the television cameras.

The next day, Saturday, May 1, the President talked at even greater length to the reporters. Reedy summoned them for a walk at about one P.M. Again Mr. Johnson waited in the Rose Garden, but in a less buoyant mood. He had both of his dogs on chains, the beagle and "Blanco," a white collie. The first time around the lawn he remained unusually silent, clapping his hands for his dogs and watching them in an abstracted way as they chased one another into the tulips around the lower fountain.

"Sic 'em, beagle," he said, "sic 'em."

At the southeast gate he noticed a crowd of tourists peering through the fence. Going over to them he reached both his hands through the iron railings, saying nothing, but shaking as many hands as were offered, as if the physical touch gave him comfort. The beagle sniffed at the people's feet.

Walking away from the gate, both hands thrust down into his pockets, and still having said hardly a word to anybody, the President looked grudgingly at the sky. The low clouds threatened rain and maybe a thunderstorm. "Don't you wish we were home, Charlie?" he asked a reporter.

"You mean Texas?" the reporter said.

"Yes, Texas."

The reporter made no answer to that, and after another silence, the President said, "Lady Bird's gone to Texas . . . Lynda Bird's in New York, and Luci had a party . . ."

He didn't finish the sentence, but he spoke with the wistfulness of a lonely man in a large and empty house. Passing under the south front of the White House somebody remarked on the rust that had formed below the Truman balcony. "Well," Mr. Johnson said, "let's go up and look at it."

Some of the reporters rode up with him in the elevator; the rest clambered up the stairs. Pacing back and forth on the balcony, Mr. Johnson seemed restless and distracted. He impulsively sat down with his back to the view and gestured vaguely to the reporters, indicating that they should also sit. A few of them found chairs; others remained standing. Everybody was slightly embarrassed and uneasy, as if they felt that they didn't belong there.

For the next two hours the President talked in a wandering and discursive way, touching on a bewildering range of subjects, switching back and forth between statements on and off the record, sometimes answering questions, sometimes not. At the beginning he said, "These things are for your tidbits, columns and whispers."

Two Negro waiters came with coffee in paper cups, passing it around on heavy silver trays. Somebody asked the President about his reputation as a man adept at domestic politics but less familiar with foreign affairs. Mr. Johnson resented the question. "That is absolutely wrong," he said. "That is your deficiency, not mine."

He reviewed his record in the Congress, observing that in the late 1930's Franklin D. Roosevelt had commissioned him to leaven the isolationist point of view popular in the Texas delegation. "I need domestic legislation much more than I need anything else," he said. "The only foreign legislation I need is the appropriations bill. I can't have any foreign policy if I go broke, or if the balance of payments is bad, or if I have no army, or if there are deep divisions in the Congress and the country."

Somebody asked if he found it difficult to deal with the heads of foreign governments. "They're not like Mansfield and Morse and Fulbright and those fellas," Mr. Johnson said, "not like the folks you were reared with."

While he talked he sat slumped well forward in his chair, one leg balanced across the other, his right hand grasping his left ankle, like a man taking off his shoes in a locker room. With his left hand he pulled at his cheek or smoothed the hair around his temples. Sometimes he would wring both hands together for emphasis, speaking always in a low whisper and searching the face of the man to whom he spoke with an earnest and beseeching expression.

"It's so difficult to educate the people," he said. "This thing in Vietnam . . . first they say we won't tell our plans . . . but I've talked myself hoarse; then they take another tack and say we won't negotiate, but I have made I don't know how many statements. . . . Then they say I should be more dramatic about it, and so I go on television, and I figure that'll sober 'em up for maybe ten days."

Talking about the place of the United States in world affairs he compared the country to a rich man he once knew who lived in a white house on a hill in Johnson City. The rich man was envied by the sawmill workers who lived in the valley; whenever anything went wrong, the sawmill workers blamed the rich man. "Some days," Mr. Johnson said, "that fella didn't know what he was being cussed out for."

When eventually it began to rain, the brief flashes of lightning flickering behind the Washington Monument, Mr. Johnson took no notice of the storm. Every now and then Valenti came with a memorandum or a confidential cable, half kneeling to present these to Mr. Johnson. The President glanced at them and either stuffed them into the pocket of his coat or handed them back without comment. He had got off onto another subject of conversation, and Valenti did not want to interrupt. "Some of the pets of the last Administration," Mr. Johnson said, "say that we have a hard time getting people to work for the Government because we don't have any style. . . . Well, I haven't noticed any drop in patriotism. . . . Some foreign governments wanted copies of our poverty and education bills, and they were pretty enlightened, sophisticated, stylish fellas . . . I mean the kind of fellas who have got real class."

Toward the end he said he thought that people in the country were getting along better now than ever before in the nation's history. He categorized the people in terms of political blocs, referring to the business and labor interests, to Jews, Catholics, Negroes and intellectuals. "There's a unity in the country now," he said, "but I wouldn't certify that it would last until dark."

Valenti at last managed to get him away. He left reluctantly, as if it soothed him to confess his doubts. He said nothing, however, about Communism in the Dominican Republic.

But for the next two days, as if the thought had suddenly occurred to him, he talked of little else. At 10 o'clock Sunday night in an unannounced television speech, Mr. Johnson redefined the reason for the American troops in Santo Domingo. The United States, he said, would not permit the establishment of another Communist government in the Western Hemisphere. He implied that his Administration would send troops anywhere at any time to accomplish that end.

On Monday, still obsessed with the need to defend his policy in the Dominican Republic, the President transformed a routine ceremony in the Rose Garden into an occasion for a blustering announcement. The ceremony involved a group who had come to receive awards for promoting physical fitness.

The President arrived 20 minutes late, followed from his office not only by Valenti and Watson but also by two Latin Americans, one of them Romulo Betancourt, a former president of Venezuela. Obviously preoccupied, the President hurried to the rostrum and began his speech without his usual joking preamble. "The enemies of freedom are always quick in their exploitation of flabbiness or fat," he said. "Our adversaries have mistakenly assumed that people who enjoy the abundance we enjoy soon become unwilling to bear the burdens of a free society."

The winners of the fitness awards, plain men from places like Boise, Idaho, and Traverse City, Mich., listened politely, standing with their hands behind their backs or held stiffly at their sides. They shifted uneasily under the glare of the cameras and the bored gaze of the reporters on the lawn.

Turning away from the rostrum, Mr. Johnson realized that some reporters might have recognized Betancourt and might conclude that they had been talking about the Dominican Republic. As an afterthought, he came back to the rostrum and introduced Mr. Betancourt. "One of the great statesmen of the hemisphere," he said, "I treasure his friendship and counsel."

In the afternoon, appearing before a crowd of trade union members at the Hilton Hotel, Mr. Johnson again returned to the subject of foreign policy. "All we want to do is to live in peace and be left alone," he said, "but we don't propose to sit here in our rocking chair with our hands folded and let the Communists set up any government in the Western Hemisphere."

Encouraged by the loud cheering and applause Mr. Johnson departed from his prepared text to quote a speech that he learned for a public-speaking contest when he was a boy of nine in Texas. "I



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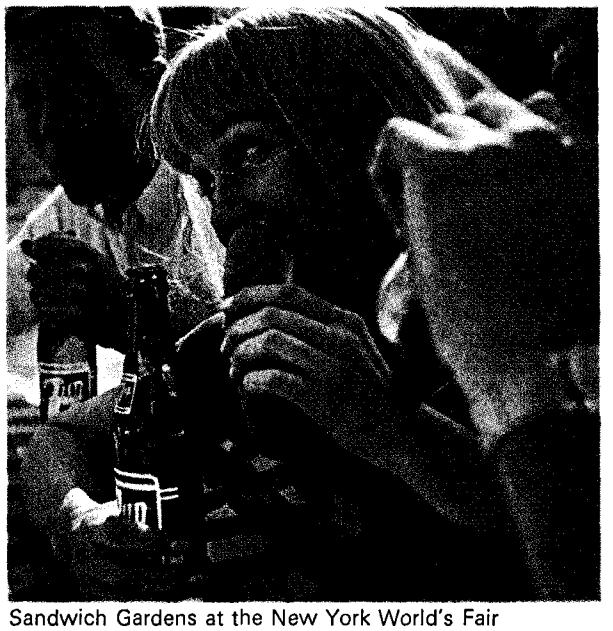
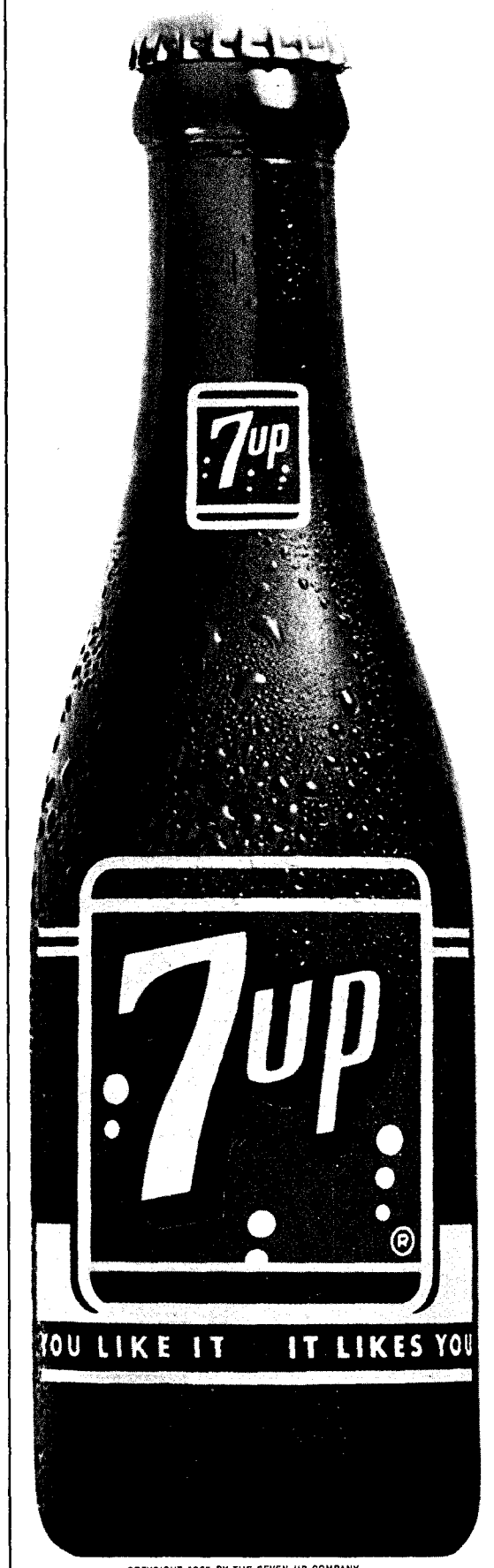
# 7-UP...WHERE THERE'S ACTION!

Seven-Up is a real natural for the action crowd! It's got the sparkle that swings...the taste that's fresh and frisky . . . and the quick-quenching action to make thirst quit. Look for it. 7-Up . . .where there's action!



For fine food and entertainment—visit the 7-Up International Sandwich Gardens at the New York World's Fair

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©Colgate-Palmolive Co., 1965

# who says

# is stronger than dirt?

## Beverly Linet... she saved $100 with just two cups of AJAX

Ajax Division of Colgate Co.
New York City

Sirs:

For three years I have been constantly frustrated by my efforts to get my living room drapes cleaned to original white.

My laundry refused to take them because they insisted the bleaching would ruin the fabric. Cleaning made them a yellowish-brownish mess.

I had planned to invest in new drapes, but decided to make one last effort to save these.

I cut small pieces of fabric from the end of the drapes and gave them a thorough hand washing in Ajax to see if it would possibly live up to your claims.

Did it ever! So, I put the drapes in my washing machine with two cups of Ajax; gave them a double cycle and results were amazing. I salvaged over a hundred dollars worth of drapes.

But the before and after samples tell the story best. The work of this detergent was almost miraculous. Needless to say I've told everyone in my laundry room to throw out every other product -- me who used to scoff at TV commercials.

Sincerely yours,

Beverly Linet

**write and tell us how you proved AJAX is stronger than dirt**

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have seen the glories of art and architecture, and mountain and river," he said. "I have seen the sunset on the Jungfrau and the full moon rise over Mount Blanc. But the fairest vision on which these eyes ever looked was the flag of my country in a foreign land."

At this point the several images of Mr. Johnson became even more confused, like the bits of colored glass tumbling into myriad shapes at the end of a kaleidoscope. The pattern was not only changing, but elusive.

The next day at the White House had the dazzling variety of a vaudeville show. The different rooms and gardens lend themselves easily to stage settings, and on Tuesday, May 4, Mr. Johnson made use of most of them. He began at 10 A.M. with a speech to the congressional leadership in the East Room. Off to the left of the podium, placed as usual in front of the brocade tapestry, stood a large map of Vietnam, the directions of military movements and objectives marked with red arrows.

Mr. Johnson had summoned a gathering of the most influential congressmen and senators to ask for an additional $700 million to pay for the war in Asia. So that they should have no illusions as to why they had been invited, he went directly to the point.

"This is not a routine appropriation," he said. "Each member of Congress who supports this request is also voting to persist in our effort to halt Communist aggression."

Having introduced his act, the President then gave a virtuoso performance, playing each of the standard political roles with enormous skill and eloquence. In his desire for universal approval he seemed willing to risk disclosing his entire repertoire.

He opened in a meek and reasonable voice. "You don't know how much I regret the necessity for ever issuing an order to bomb anything," he said. ". . . I do not ask complete approval for every phase and every action of your Government; I do ask for prompt support of our basic course."

Speaking of the marines in the Dominican Republic, he modulated briefly into a sentimental voice: "It has been necessary for a few marines to go out and take an old lady and her little belongings and with a crippled hip, carry her down through the streets where the firing is taking place . . . but we carried 3,000 that way."

He ended loud and tough and patriotic: "This appropriation says to the world that we are going to spend every dollar; we are going to take every action; we are going to walk the last mile, to see that peace is restored in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic . . . so that people cannot be gobbled up in the twentieth century and swallowed."

An hour later, at a ceremony in the Rose Garden, Mr. Johnson presented the Distinguished Service Medal to Adm. Howard Page Smith. The admiral, a small, smiling and white-haired man, had retired three days before as the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. At the east end of the garden, led by a drum major wearing a shako, the Marine Band played military marches. A color guard stood to attention on the steps leading away from the portico outside the President's office. Bright-colored parasols had been placed over the television cameras, giving the lawn the air of a movie set.

After the President had pinned the medal to his uniform, Admiral Smith felt constrained to make a speech. This clearly annoyed Mr. Johnson, but the admiral persisted. "I am deeply grateful to the thousands of officers and men who have helped me over the years," he said, "and without whom this would not have been possible."

At one o'clock the President called the reporters into his office to explain how the $700 million would be spent in Vietnam. The reporters arranged themselves in a dense semicircle across the desk from Mr. Johnson, who sat leaning well back in his blue leather chair.

The office is large, comfortably furnished and supplied with a lot of telephones. The French doors open out into the Rose Garden, and this view of lawn and trees, together with the rows of books in the white bookshelves, suggest the office of a university president in a pleasant, New England town. At the north end of the room, away from the President's desk, two beige sofas and a few chairs are placed around a low coffee table. On the side tables stand bowls of flowers and photographs of Mr. Johnson's daughters.

"Fellas," the President said, "I just signed the message askin' for money."

He held up a single sheet of white paper and waved it over his head. He then invited the reporters to direct any specific questions to Cyrus Vance, the Deputy Secretary of Defense. Mr. Vance, a modest and soft-spoken man, had been standing diffidently to one side. "Do it here if you want to, Cy," Mr. Johnson said. "I'm gonna leave."

Vance began to talk about the number of planes shot down and the "accelerated use of ammunition." The President, however, remained in the room, pacing back and forth behind the desk and cutting news bulletins from the Teletype machines. Mr. Johnson's presence distracted both the reporters and Mr. Vance. The questioning dwindled to a tentative close. The correspondent for Tass, the Soviet news agency, studiously took notes but failed to recognize Mr. Vance. "And who is this, please?" he said to the man standing next to him. "What is his name?"

Still later in the afternoon, just before four o'clock, the same blond girl whom I had seen on my first day in the White House walked up and down in the lobby repeating her familiar cries to follow her. On this occasion she was advertising the presentation of the National Book Committee medal for literature to Thornton Wilder.

The ceremony took place in the East Room, where, earlier in the day, the President had asked for money. The room seemed lighter and more spacious; there were fewer people and the map of Vietnam had been removed. In the foyer the string section of the Marine Band played *Tea for Two*.

Wilder was entirely at ease, leaning on the presidential rostrum (the seal had been removed) as if he were presiding at a seminar in advanced English literature. "I haunt libraries," he said, "from Augusta, Maine, to San Diego, California. . . . At closing time I am found in the remotest stacks."

He waved his medal over his head (a gesture reminiscent of the President waving the request for $700 million), and he told his audience that many others eventually would win the same prize. "I'd like to read the works of those who will receive this medal twenty, thirty, forty years from now . . . Americans . . . Americans all."

Mrs. Johnson spoke at the end of the ceremony, expressing her admiration for writers who could make words "march and sing and cannonade" and recalling her childhood reading of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* and *A Child's Garden of Verses*. "Unlike some modern writers," she said to Wilder, "you respect your fellow man and you respect the American language. You have never confused being modern in language with a dreary reliance on four-letter words."

Afterward the company wandered through the hall toward the State Dining Room, and there, among gilded mirrors and gold tureens, everybody had iced tea and cookies. The band played *April in Paris;* the literary ladies talked about books and the uncomfortably humid weather.

On my return to the west lobby, the other reporters (none of whom had bothered with Mr. Wilder) assured me that I had missed nothing of consequence. Everybody sat around for another hour, working crossword puzzles or comparing golf scores. At seven o'clock, Reedy again called us into the President's office.

"I hear you all have something on over at the Press Club this evening," Mr. Johnson said, "and I don't want to interfere with anybody's plans."

"Pay it no mind, sir," somebody said, "pay it no mind."

"OK," Mr. Johnson said, "let's go."

It had been a hot day, the first day of summer in Washington, and there was still no wind. The flags hung limply from their poles. The shadows had already begun to lengthen across the lawn. The President, in an unusually affable humor, said his remarks could be considered on the record. The military subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee already had approved his request for the $700 million; the leadership in both the House and the Senate had agreed to ignore the customary five days of debate required on such matters.

"I advised 'em to get it out unanimous while they're all in a pretty good humor," the President said, ". . . before you newspapermen can stir 'em up."

He said he had gone before the senators and the congressmen that morning with "a quiverin' in my stomach." As examples of his discomfort he then did comic imitations of the way he thought several senators had looked at him while he had given his speech. "That Morse . . . lookin' at you this way"—he grimaced—"and somebody else . . . peerin' at you like that"—he frowned—". . . I try so hard to do what is right . . . I thought about it last night, and I decided I'd talk to 'em because we're all in this together. If the ship goes down, we all go down together, and I thought they ought to get their nickel's worth."

At the drinking fountain on the lower curve of the roadway Mr. Johnson stopped to hold up his beagle so that the dog could drink. Obligingly he held the pose until all the photographers could make the picture. Nudging the reporter nearest him, he apologized for his elusiveness. "I don't mean to play coy with you fellas," he said. "I wish I could tell you two weeks in advance what I was goin' to eat for lunch on a certain day. It makes me feel bad, but things come up. I don't know what I'm goin' to be doin' from one day to the next. Even Bird doesn't know."

He said nothing more for a few minutes, watching his dogs chase a squirrel around the bole of a tree, and then he started to talk wistfully again of Texas. "I'd like to spend as much time as I can in the sun, and I would have gone this last weekend, but it doesn't look right to be up in the air with troops movin'. . . . I got all the facilities and communications with me, but some poor farmer might not understand that."

Although he noticed a crowd of tourists at the southeast gate, he didn't feel the need to go over and shake hands with them. Again reviewing the events that led to the shooting in the Dominican Republic, he said he thought some of the criticism in the papers had been unfair. He looked up at the sky, his hands in his back pockets. "We ought not to be persecuted for this. We've acted in the best interest of the country and humanity. . . . I just can't believe that any man ever got to be President who didn't want to be the best President the country ever had. The big question is not doin' what's right, but of knowin' what's right. . . . Somebody says, 'Let's go.' . . . Somebody else says, 'Let's have a siesta and wait until tomorrow.' . . . Nobody wants to run on a platform of being wrong."

On his last turn around the lawn the President raised the subject of the war in Vietnam, observing that since he took office the Viet Cong had suffered heavy losses.

"Since I came in," he said, "we killed 26,000 of 'em. . . . Everybody wants a political solution; it's a mess, ain't no question about that. . . . I'm not recommendin' it for desired readin' to any of you. Some folks say we should stop the bombing; well, that's fine. . . . I'd like to stop the bombing too, but if we stop . . . and they don't, then that's a little dangerous. When you duck and dodge and doubt and shimmy, every man and his dog gives you a kick."

At eight o'clock the President went back to his office, visibly depressed. He waved good-bye to the assembled reporters and called to his dog. "Come on, beagle," he said, "let's work awhile."

That was the last I saw of Mr. Johnson (in any except a formal, public way) for nearly six weeks. He had tried to persuade the press to make bright his image; instead he found both his policies and his manner of implementing them called increasingly into question. As the criticism became more pointed, Mr. Johnson withdrew into a brooding silence. He stopped his walks in the garden, and it was said that he thought the press ungrateful.

Over the next few weeks the situation in the Dominican Republic grew more confused; the monsoon rains began in Vietnam, and the war there went badly. The United States suspended bombing north of the 17th parallel but then resumed the raids for lack of diplomatic overtures from Hanoi.



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The rumors held that Mr. Johnson was making hourly decisions, choosing the targets himself, shouting at people over the telephone, but none of this excitement made itself felt in the west lobby. George Reedy remained as uncommunicative as a vending machine. On a day of crisis (American troops under fire in Asia and the Caribbean) I walked into the lobby in the middle of the afternoon and found five reporters asleep on their couches. They knew they lived according to Mr. Johnson's whim and that they would get nothing of interest until his mood changed.

It was during this period that I entered into negotiations with Jack Valenti. From the beginning I had hoped for an audience with Mr. Johnson, but I had been told by the other reporters not to mention this to Reedy for fear of upsetting him. They suggested that I apply to Mr. Valenti, the man who arranged such things.

Valenti, a former public-relations consultant in Houston, has dark hair which has begun to go gray at the temples. His movements are quick and precise. His intense, dark eyes never waver from the eyes of the man to whom he speaks.

I had introduced myself to him on one of the President's walks, and he, extremely cordial, had encouraged me to telephone him. This I did for several days and at last received an invitation to talk with him in his office.

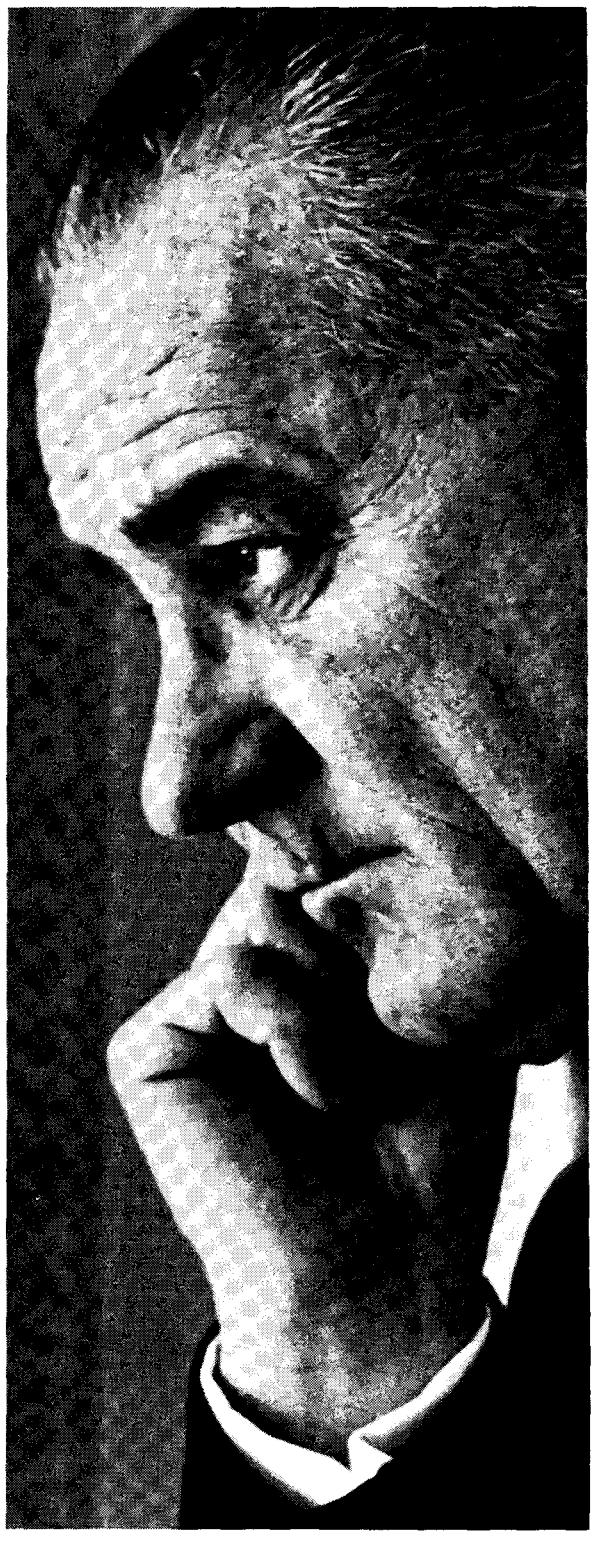
His office is one of those along the south front of the west wing, accessible from the corridor behind the west lobby. In the outer office, where his secretaries sit, recorded music, like the music in elevators and airports, seeps through loudspeakers in the walls. Like a number of politicians I had talked to, both in Texas and in Washington, Valenti seemed defensive, as if he assumed that I knew something that I shouldn't know.

"I'll tell you the truth, my friend," he said, "hardly anybody in the country knows this man. The real Lyndon Johnson is not visible to many people. Even the people close to him see only a fragment."

Dismissing the published reports of the President's character and style, Valenti gestured contemptuously at the wall separating his office from the west lobby, where the reporters waited for news. "Those walls are very thick, my friend," he said.

He talked for over an hour, always in generalities, speaking of the President's "fabulous" and "mystical" instincts for men and affairs, comparing him at considerable length to Abraham Lincoln. Much of what he said he later included in a speech to a convention of advertising executives in Boston, a speech that was widely quoted and ridiculed in Washington. To the advertising men, Valenti likened the President to Antaeus, the giant of Greek mythology whose mother was earth. To me he said at the end: "I don't know how you measure greatness, but I don't know how you would measure it in terms that did not include this man. If only the people knew how lucky they were to have that man commanding their destinies. He is, as the poet Horace said, 'A man who can stand undismayed with the ruins of the world breaking around his shoulders.'"

I asked if it would be possible to talk to Mr. Johnson. He said that maybe something could be arranged; he would let me know. At that point I still hoped that if I talked directly to the President, maybe I could see beyond the bewildering poses and images, could glimpse the landscape through the shifting fog.



The images never seemed more blurred or contradictory than in the last week of May. The President gave a series of lawn parties, the first, on Tuesday, May 25, in honor of the delegates to the White House Conference on Natural Beauty.

A large band shell had been placed slightly to the left of the center of the lawn, and on this were arranged microphones and chairs for the principal delegates. A semicircle of about 400 folding chairs faced the shell on the north side; off to the left there was a wooden platform for the Marine Band and farther away another platform for the movie cameras and lights. Near the corners of the lawn, under red-and-white striped awnings, four long tables had been set with trays of food and bowls of punch.

The speeches were scheduled to begin at five P.M., but a few minutes before five it began to rain. Laurance Rockefeller, the chairman of the conference, took the microphone and invited everybody to move inside to the East Room. The delegates obliged, but the room was not big enough to accommodate them comfortably. For half an hour they stood squashed against the walls, like a crowd in a New York subway. Few of them could see the presidential rostrum.

When all had been set in place (the cameras lugged in and other tables set up) Mr. Johnson entered the room in a boisterous rush, borne forward by a jostling wedge of Secret Service agents and shaking hands with anybody in reach. He spoke as a builder of a great society in a green and shining land, reluctantly called away from this task to deal with perils abroad. "I remember when I was a very young man," he said, "a boy that walked through the sand . . . hot sand . . . up to see my grandfather. . . . My granddaddy would ask me questions. . . . He would say, 'How many ponies do you have?' and, 'How many chickens do you have?' and, 'How many cows are down there at your little place?' and, 'Tell me about the state of the crops,' and, 'When are you going to start pickin' your cotton?' . . . I would stand there and wiggle my toes in the sand with my finger in my mouth, and if I knew the answers and answered all his questions correctly, Grandpa would take me in and open a black mahogany desk he had . . . and reach in and get an apple. . . . And those hills and those fields and that river was the only world that I really had in those years. . . . Yet the sight and the feel of that country somehow or other burned itself into my mind. . . . We were not a wealthy family, but this was my rich inheritance. All my life I have drawn strength, and something more, from those Texas hills. Sometimes, in the highest councils of the nation, in this house, I sit back and I can almost feel that rough, unyielding, sticky clay soil between my fingers, and it stirs memories that often give me comfort and sometimes gives me a pretty firm purpose."

The lawn party on Wednesday, the following afternoon, was the annual reception for high-ranking officers at the Pentagon. The lawn had been arranged as on the previous evening, except that the Marine Band occupied the band shell and 10th Naval District Steel Band sat on the smaller of the two wooden platforms. Dressed in Jamaican shirts and sashes, the sailors nevertheless failed to appear Negro.

The officers, none of them below the rank of major general or rear admiral, wore freshly pressed summer uniforms. On a red carpet placed on the oval roadway below the south front of the White House, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson stood in a receiving line with Vice President and Mrs. Humphrey and Secretary of Defense and Mrs. McNamara. Just as the guests started to shuffle forward through the line, the steel band abruptly began playing calypso music, the burbling-water sound amplified through loudspeakers in the trees. Opposite Mr. Johnson a White House gardener held his two dogs on chains. While he shook hands with the procession of generals and admirals, his eyebrows rising and falling over his fixed smile, the President looked fondly at his dogs. Once he interrupted the line to call to them and pet them.

Before half the guests had managed to go through the line Mr. Johnson seemed bored with the proceeding. He dismissed Mr. Humphrey and Mr. McNamara and walked along the rest of the line shaking hands at his own pace, which was very fast.

When he had finished with this formality, Mr. Johnson, followed closely by the usual cluster of reporters, roamed aimlessly around the lawn, talking to nobody but waving vaguely at people he recognized. He seemed impatient and distracted. He mounted the wooden platform occupied by the steel band, smiled at the surprised musicians, and descended on the other side, disappearing briefly into a clump of trees. Several minutes later he recrossed the entire lawn, and went into the White House. Some of the guests, thinking that protocol had been satisfied, left the party.

After a half hour's absence, Mr. Johnson returned. Going directly to the band shell he delivered a brief speech, quoting at length from Lucius Aemilius Paulus, Roman consul chosen to conduct a war against the Macedonians in 168 B.C.

"I am not one of those who think that commanders ought at no time to receive advice," Mr. Johnson said, reading from the consul's remarks in the Roman senate. ". . . On the contrary, I should deem that man more proud than wise who regulated every proceeding by the standard of his own single judgment. . . . If, therefore, anyone thinks himself qualified to give advice . . . let him come with me into Macedonia. He shall be furnished with a ship, a horse, a tent; even his traveling charges shall be defrayed. But if he thinks this too much trouble and prefers the repose of a city life to the toils of war, let him not, on land, assume the office of a pilot."

He presented the quotation, inscribed on a plaque, to the officers and men of the armed services. The general appointed to receive it, however, had gone home with those who thought the reception at an end. Another officer, much embarrassed, stepped forward to receive the plaque.

The Thursday lawn party, another annual occasion (in honor of the staff assistants employed by senators and congressmen on Capitol Hill) was distinguished only by the President's magnificent exit. He came late, walking with his dogs across the Rose Garden



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from his office, and he stayed not much longer than 40 minutes, shaking a few hands and exchanging a few pleasantries with Vice President Humphrey. His helicopter then landed on the Ellipse, the expanse of grass just below and across the road from the south lawn. The President was going to Texas for the Memorial Day weekend, and as he left, his jet rising slowly, he could look down at the people gaping up at him.

He returned to Washington on Monday night, and the next morning he spoke at the National Cathedral. His daughter Luci was among the graduates of the National Cathedral School.

The presidential podium had been placed below the pulpit; klieg lights drooped from the clerestory gallery at the end of long poles, like the trumpets held by angels in religious paintings. The graduating class, in white dresses and academic gowns, entered the nave in solemn procession, accompanied by the high clear sound of young girls singing.

Mr. Johnson spoke in an earnest and confiding voice, defining the war in Vietnam as a crusade against the forces of darkness. "I would commit the American nation to face up to its obligation to be with the world's people on their march toward the life that all God's children should know on this earth," he said. "When the time of judgment comes, it will be no excuse to say that they were far away, or their language was strange, or their color was different, or I did not know their name."

When he came to the end of his speech, the President's voice had dropped to a whisper so low and so intimate as to be almost inaudible. "It's not hard to act when you know that you are right," he said. "I find it far more difficult to act when I just believe that I am right, but sometimes knowing that I could be wrong. . . . A great statesman once said that he would rather be right than President. . . . Well, I must try to be both. . . . I must try, as best I can, with whatever the good Lord gave me and whatever help God chooses to give me now, to seek the right course. . . ."

Before he went back to his place, Mr. Johnson walked over and kissed his daughter softly on the cheek.

Later that same afternoon, at a formal press conference in the East Room, he confronted the reporters with the sullen hostility that had been characteristic of his attitude toward them since the second week in May.

He wore heavy makeup and rocked impatiently back and forth on the sides of his shoes, suffering the questions from the press as if these were a tedious nuisance. To a question he chose to ignore he said merely, "I don't see how an answer to that would do you or your country any good."

The next morning, I called Valenti and again asked for an audience with Mr. Johnson. I felt as if I needed guidance, a clue, a magic word that would roll away the stone and make clear the enigma. Over the previous two months I had seen at least seven different Lyndon Johnsons; either that or a series of fast impersonations by an accomplished vaudeville actor. In Texas I had seen a proud man rejoicing in his strength and pride, indulging his slightest whim, indifferent to the cries of the rabble. At the White House I had seen a lonely man craving trust and affection. At various points in between I had seen a political genius, a country preacher, a forgiving father and a distracted general.

I confessed my confusion to Valenti, and two weeks later, on the 16th of June, he called to say that I should come to the White House at six P.M. The President would be in Georgia that afternoon, he said, but he was expected to return in the early evening. Maybe I would get to see him and maybe not, but at least my name would be entered on the schedule of appointments.

I presented myself at the appointed time; the Secret Service agent at the wide desk in the west lobby ushered me into the Fish Room. He was anxious that the White House Press Corps (which had followed the President to Georgia) should not suspect my presence. "If you don't mind," he said, ". . . in here . . . so that when the others get back . . . you understand. . . ."

The Fish Room, off to the left of the lobby, is a large, oval room so named because President Franklin D. Roosevelt once used it as an aquarium. The table that evening was decorated with a bowl of yellow roses. On the far wall hung a painting by Frederic Remington, the familiar scene of a cowboy roping a steer. Valenti appeared after about 20 minutes. "Well, my friend," he said, "I think you're going to get to see the boss . . . the big man."

He smiled in a way intended to forestall my expressions of gratitude, as if he were accustomed to conferring favors. When I think of it now, I am embarrassed by my own absurdity. Even then, despite all that I had seen and heard, I hoped that by the grace of some unforeseen miracle I might talk to the President of the United States as if he were an ordinary man.

Valenti asked what questions I expected to put to the President, and I showed him the list that I had written a month before. These must have seemed to him naïve, dealing, as they all did, with moral abstractions. He shrugged and looked at me out of the corners of his eyes, as if I were a newly arrived immigrant who still believed in campaign slogans. "I don't think there'll be time for all of them, my friend," he said, "but we'll see."

He left the room, and 15 minutes later Marvin Watson came in, smiling in his customary affable way and carrying his familiar Manila folder.

"If you'll start this way . . ." he said, ". . . I think . . ."

He left the sentence unfinished, and I followed him into the rear corridor, past a Secret Service agent sitting with his arms folded across his chest, into a large office immediately adjoining the office of the President.

Here I was quickly introduced to Yoichi Okamoto, the President's personal photographer. Okamoto goes wherever Mr. Johnson goes, taking pictures of him on a horse, at a state dinner, in a cabinet meeting, in a boat, on the south lawn, in conversation with a visiting chief of state. "Pretend I'm not there," Okamoto said, "I'm sure you know the technique."

It was then seven o'clock; the taped music in Watson's office modulated from fox-trots to Latin-American tunes. Five minutes later the light on the President's telephone went out. Watson opened the door to the oval office and held out his arm in a gesture indicating that I should enter.

Mr. Johnson stood in the center of the room, his hands in his pockets, staring mournfully at his dog Blanco. Without saying anything to either of us he came forward, his heavy bulk blotting out the light in the inner corridor between his and Watson's office. Still without speaking he passed into his smaller private office and sprawled carelessly in an armchair, his feet up on a footstool. This small office, in the south wall of the building, is furnished with green velvet drapes and an 18th-century writing desk. Watson discreetly retired, but Okamoto remained, turning his cameras at different angles. "I'd like a root beer . . ." Mr. Johnson said. "You want a Coke or somethin'?"

His voice was flat and perfunctory, the voice of the man on television. When a waiter had brought the drinks, he said, "OK . . . what?"

Obviously concerned with other things, Mr. Johnson stared at me with an intent glare, submitting to the tiresome formality of another interview. Over the past month, although he had ignored the White House press corps, he had granted numerous interviews to columnists, but these apparently had not done him much good.

The first question, borrowing a quotation from the President's address at the National Cathedral, referred to the "answers" of which he had said the country was desperately in need. Mr. Johnson brushed it aside with the impatient gesture of a man swatting a fly.

"Go on to something else," he said.

The second question, about the moral basis of the American position in Vietnam, he also ignored. But some word in it caught his fancy, and for the next 20 minutes he talked at random about peace in the world, the fighting in Asia, the economy at home and his own high ratings in that day's opinion polls.

The substance of the talk remains off the record, as do all such conversations with the President. Even if it had been on the record, however, that would not have made the slightest difference. Not that what he said was in any way trivial or unimportant, but I had heard it all so many times before; the familiar, sterile phrases of a thousand, half-forgotten speeches. I had talked to the public man on the television screen, and I had heard a recorded announcement. It was as if I had gone backstage to visit the old vaudevillian in his dressing room, and he, staring at the faded posters on the walls, had performed a series of music-hall turns.

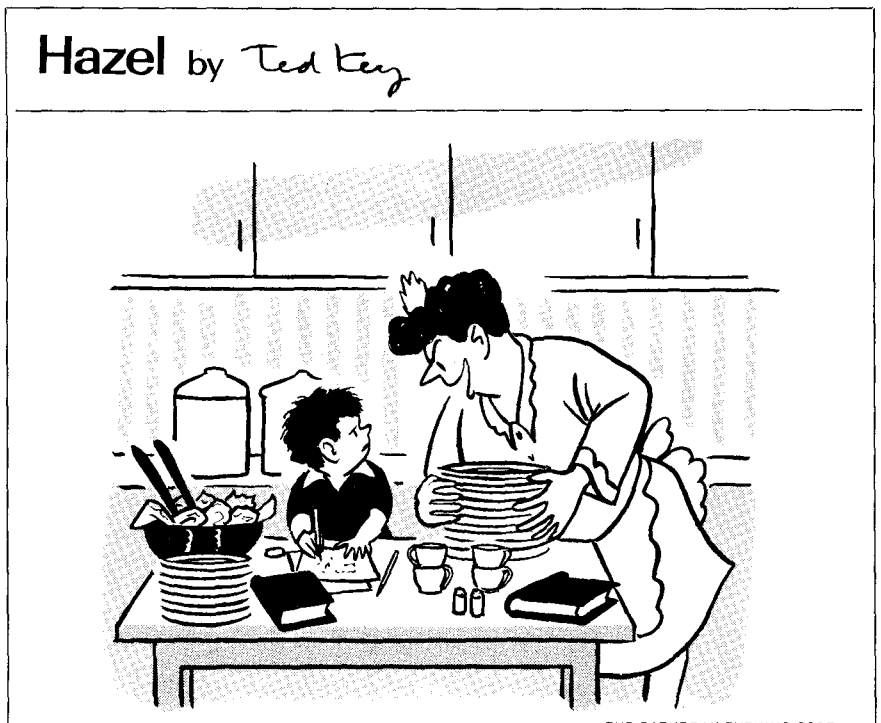
I wanted to leave the room before the interview was half over. There was no point to it; it was a waste of Mr. Johnson's time. Confronted with the possibility of revealing himself to somebody of whose motive he could not be sure, the President chose to withdraw behind another mask.

When he had finished speaking, Mr. Johnson stood up and limply extended his right hand, the fingers drooping down from the wrist, in the manner of a cardinal holding out his ring. I shook the offered hand but felt no answering force. That, too, should not have surprised me. The gesture was symbolic and ceremonial, meaning that I had come and gone but not necessarily that I had talked to anybody.

Only then did I suddenly understand the nature of Mr. Johnson's success. I had listened to him nearly every day for two months, and at the end I knew as little as when I began, which, of course, was the point. The politician, like the magician or the quick-change artist, never gives away the trick, never goes home with the customers. If anybody out front spots the rabbit in the bottom of the hat or recognizes the familiar face under the funny wig, the act is ruined and the illusion lost.

As I left the White House I noticed a solitary picket parading back and forth on Pennsylvania Avenue with a sign. The sign condemned the Great Society and protested, in a clumsy and wavering scrawl, against a number of illegible injustices. The unkempt man who carried it danced lightly on his toes, doffing his ruined hat at the pedestrians who circled warily around him.

I dismissed him as a fool, another of those inconsequential persons who stand in the rain everywhere on behalf of hopeless causes. But then, as I passed him by, as warily as the others did, it occurred to me that for all my credentials and despite my talk with the President of the United States, I knew no more than he. □



"If I'm in your way. . . ."



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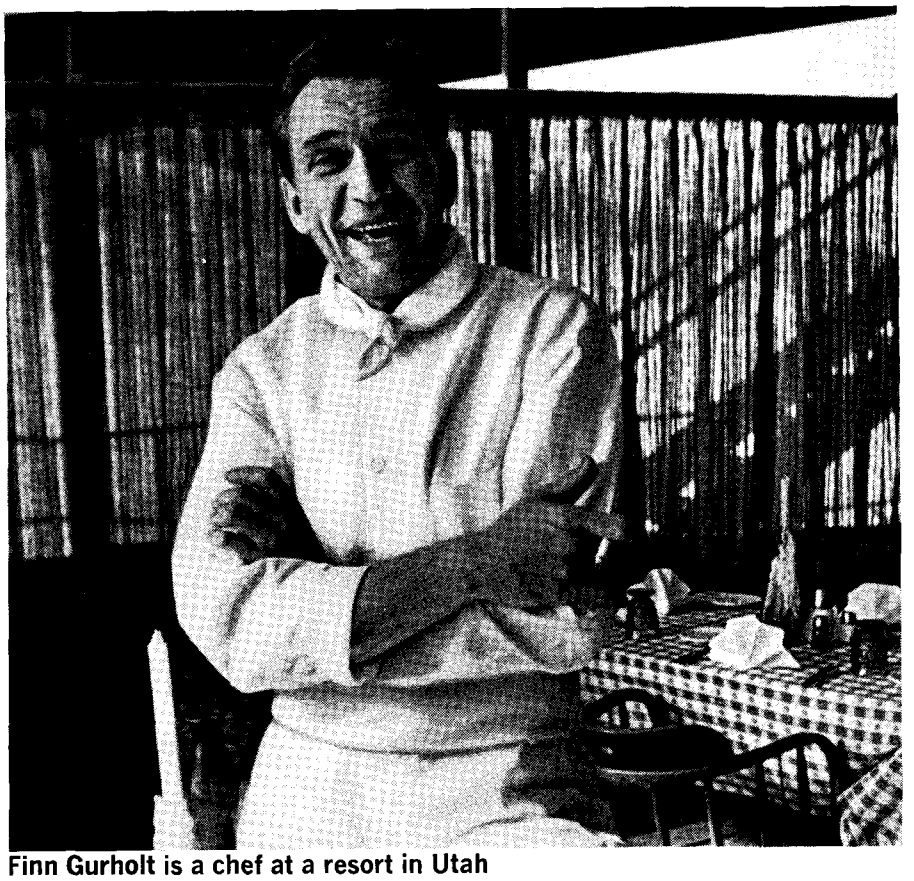
# Chesterfield People:

## They like a mild smoke, but just don't like filters. (How about you?)



Finn Gurholt is a chef at a resort in Utah

Malcolm W. Frasier distributes marine supplies in Massachusetts

Chesterfield People get the taste that satisfies. Do you?

Marion Brand, of Pennsylvania, is a cruise ship hostess

If you like a mild smoke, but don't like filters, try today's Chesterfield King—mildest-tasting Chesterfield in 53 years. Vintage tobaccos—grown mild, aged mild, blended mild. Made to taste even milder through longer length. They satisfy!

**CHESTERFIELD KING** tastes great...tastes mild!



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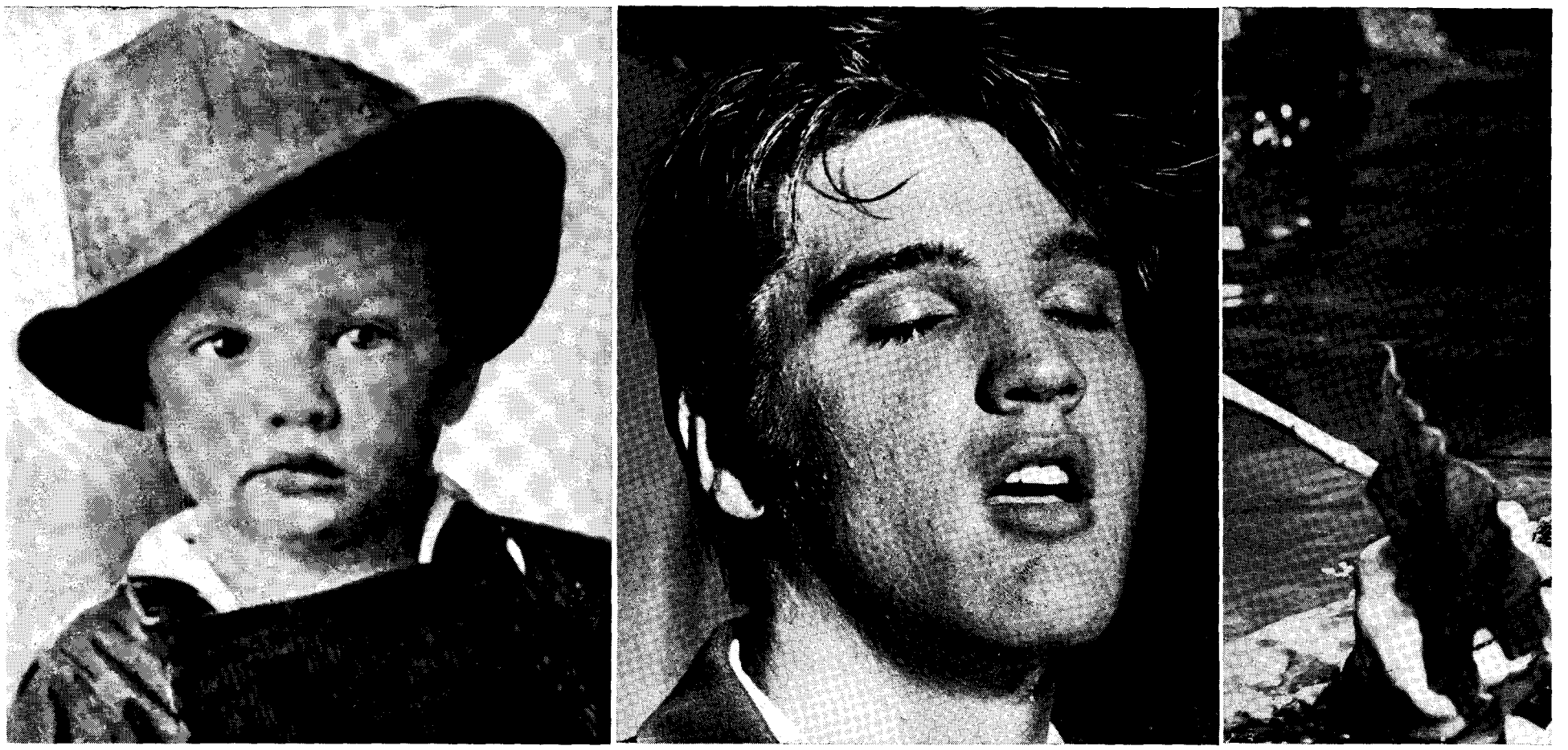
*By C. Robert Jennings*

# THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ELVIS

*"I don't know what it is," says Elvis about his success, "but I hope it doesn't stop." From left: Elvis at 3; on a 1957 tour; emerging from hiding place in* HARUM SCARUM*; appearing at charity affair; wearing burnoose in movie role.*



A Elvis Presley
B
C Edward G. Robinson
D Eddie Albert
E Richard Chamberlain
F James Garner

So reads the directory of stars in the main dressing-room building on the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lot in Culver City, Calif. Visitors ask the obvious question: "Who is in B?" One touring lady was sure the studio kept B closed in memory of Clark Gable, its most famous occupant. A journalist suggested it was set aside for Greta Garbo, if and when she returned from seclusion. The curious truth is that dressing room B is reserved for the small army of young men who surround Elvis Presley. "No other star gets two dressing rooms," sighs a studio executive, "and no one else ever has."

But no one else has ever been a star quite like Elvis Presley. At 30, he is the highest-paid performer in the history of show business. For making four movies and a handful of records this year, he will earn at least three million dollars. His 18 films, which cost about $30 million to produce, have already grossed over $175 million. More than 100 million copies of his records have been sold in his 10 years with RCA Victor. One platter, the undecipherable *Hound Dog*, has sold 6.5 million copies, and one album, *Blue Hawaii*, has passed the two million mark. The merchandising of Elvis T-shirts, Teddy bears and other novelties brings in about three million dollars annually.

Such success has startled and appalled—but not yet silenced—critics who once considered Presley a grotesque flash in the pan. For in the 10 years since he first gyrated onto the American scene, he has not only managed to endure; he has also achieved such financial security that he no longer deigns to fill nightclub engagements, make public appearances or ululate on television. "Outside of Walt Disney," says Ben Schwalb, producer of Presley's new film, *Tickle Me*, "Elvis is the only sure thing in this business."

By some voodoo known only to Elvis he has succeeded in bridging the gap between the spastic '50's and the current mayhem. His strutting and strumming pale in comparison with today's discothèque gyrations, yet his fans remain faithful.

"Elvis has sort of a dread fascination for lonely women," explains Dr. Harold Greenwald, a prominent author and psychologist. "He seems to be uninhibited and wild. And there is a hint of cruelty to him. When he sings, he is like a method actor: He is in some fantasy of his own which coincides with the fantasies of his listeners."

Paradoxically, other observers feel that Elvis is successful because he projects purity. "He's a clean-cut, clean-living man," says Sam Katzman, producer of two Presley pictures. "There's not a blemish." Adds an M-G-M spokesman, "They never go to bed in a Presley picture. Otherwise, mamas wouldn't let their kids come."

Elvis himself seems powerless to explain his own success. "I don't know what it is," he says. "I just fell into it, really. My daddy and I were laughing about it just the other day. He looked at me and said, 'What happened, El? The last thing I remember is I was working in a can factory, and you were driving a truck.' And I remember how, after something big happened along the way, I was sitting at home and found my mama staring at me. I asked her why, and she just shook her head and said, 'I don't believe it.' We all feel the same about it still. It just . . . caught us up. But I sure hope it doesn't stop."

It isn't likely to. One reason is Elvis's manager, a crafty, beady-eyed man named Col. Thomas A. Parker whose personal credo is "Don't try to ex-



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**There's less mumble from his lips and less wiggle in his hips, but Elvis Presley is still the highest-paid performer in Hollywood history.**

*In typical 1956 rock-'n'-roll show, Elvis performed gyrations that made teen-agers scream—and parents protest.*

plain it; just sell it." In his gaudy Paramount and M-G-M offices, Parker surrounds himself with such specialty items as pink bunnies and Teddy bears, Elvis pennants, posters, cutouts and stacks of records. He often wears gaudy hats and sport shirts with "Elvis" embroidered on all sides. "The big shots are afraid to be seen with me," he says. "Saves a whole lot of time."

When Parker first went to Twentieth Century-Fox—where Elvis made his screen debut—production-boss Buddy Adler delivered a prologue on Elvis's youth and lack of experience. Then he got to the point. "Would $25,000 be all right?" The colonel's eyes studied him incredulously for a moment, then relaxed. "Why, that's just fine for me. Now how about the boy?" Similarly, when a TV network offered Elvis $50,000 for a single appearance, the colonel said, "All right, but I won't let him sing." Parker boasts: "I consider it my patriotic duty to keep Elvis up in the ninety-percent tax bracket."

He seems to be succeeding admirably. When Elvis made his first appearance in Las Vegas, the colonel not only refused to accept a check but demanded cash in advance. "They got an atom-bomb testing place out there in the desert," he explained. "What if some feller pressed the wrong button?" After the Seattle World's Fair agreed to give Elvis a quarter of a million dollars for *one* appearance, the colonel added a "rain clause," explaining, "It just says that in case of rain, Elvis and the colonel reserve the right to sell their dollar plastic umbrellas.

"You've always got to think big in this business," the colonel explains. "A sure way to debase your merchandise is to give it away. They don't want Elvis if he's cheap."

Despite his wealth, Elvis today leads a remarkably undramatic existence. He lives behind electrically operated gates in a Movie-Star Modern villa in Bel Air. Inside, the place looks more like a rec hall than a home, studded rather arbitrarily with pinball machines, a pool table, jukebox, card table, shelves of books and stuffed animals, hi-fis, radios, round ski-lodge fireplaces and a soft-drink-only bar.

Elvis does not touch liquor, and smokes only an occasional cigar. He attempts to keep in shape by dieting on yogurt and coffee, but now and then he succumbs to gastronomical temptations. One recent lunch consisted of a bowl of gravy, a bowl of mashed potatoes, nine slices of bacon, a quart of milk, a lettuce salad, tomato juice, and six slices of bread.

A few years ago his favorite recreation was the dodgem cars at nearby amusement parks, but he has since outgrown that stage. Asked what he did, say, last weekend, he will reply: "Oh, I took the Rolls out for a drive, but the freeways were so crowded that I came back home and watched TV."

When he's not watching television, Elvis relaxes by indulging in an almost continual round of playful pummeling with the eight young male assistants who live with him and who are known colloquially as the Memphis Mafia. He practices karate and water-pistol marksmanship with them, then gathers them for close-harmony singing.

Elvis handles his court with all the aplomb of a Renaissance prince. "I am the boss," he says. "I have to be. I have no need for bodyguards, but I have very specific uses for a highly trained C.P.A., another man to handle travel arrangements and make reservations, a wardrobe man, a confidential aide and a man to handle security in crowds. This is my corporation."

Directors cast the Memphis Mafia as extras and find them oddly helpful. "I'd heard they were terrors," says George Sidney, "but I found them charming. If anything, they're over-polite."

This is not surprising, for Presley



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*In unreleased HARUM SCARUM, Elvis succumbs to romantic charms of desert beauty Fran Jeffries, who slips him a goblet of drugged wine to involve him in an assassination plot.*

himself is the embodiment of courtesy. "He's the shyest soul I've ever met in this business," exclaims Hedda Hopper. "I say, 'Call me Hedda, Elvis; everybody else does.' He says, 'Yes, ma'am, Mrs. Hopper.'" Not long ago Jackie Gleason visited Elvis on the set and scolded him for calling him "sir" and "mister." Elvis thought for a moment and then replied, deadpan, "When I was a little boy, my mama told me that anybody one year older than I was 'mister,' and Mr. Gleason, you're one year older than I am, I think, sir."

The only time such unfailing courtesy is apt to be discarded—even temporarily—is on weekends when Elvis and his courtiers travel to a little park in Beverly Hills' Coldwater Canyon. There they don red jerseys, white helmets and blue sweat pants and square off against a touch-football team from, say an M-G-M TV series. "There is a tacit understanding that Elvis is not to be roughed up," says an insider, "but *he* can be as rough as he likes."

The games attract youngsters from 13 to 30—mostly young ladies in beehive coiffures, tight Capri pants and too much makeup. Afterward Elvis's scouts will invite a chosen few to "come on up to the house." The entourage—loaded down with sandwiches, bananas and cold drinks—will then move out.

For every girl who enters the villa, a dozen may linger outside, pining for an invitation. "Sometimes he'll let me in," says an impressive blonde in a leopard-skin coat. "It depends on his mood. Other times I wait for three or four hours before I drift off. Just to tease him, we'll sing, 'We love you, Beatles; oh, yes, we do-hoo,' before we go, though." Parenthetically, Elvis loves the Beatles too-hoo.

Elvis has shown affection for Anne and Connie and Tuesday and Jocelyn and Joan and Jackie and Anita and Mary Ann, many of them costars in his movies. In *G.I. Blues*, his love scenes with Juliet Prowse went far beyond the helpless director's cries of "cut." Finally director Norman Taurog called him aside and said, "You don't have to put your heart and soul into it." Replied Elvis: "How can you *help* but put your heart and soul into this?"

His dedication to these love scenes seems to be appreciated. "He's really one of the most sincere people in the most insincere town on earth," says Juliet Prowse. Elvis took Miss Prowse nightclubbing in Las Vegas, where he also had a spin with Ann-Margret. "When I like someone," Ann-Margret explains, "I say scoobie. Elvis is scoobie." Other ladies call him "humble," "intelligent," "unselfish" and "sweet."

Diplomatically, Elvis himself refuses to comment on the passing parade of cute young things who come to visit him. "So far," he says, "there just doesn't seem to be enough time in my life for getting serious with women. Things might be different if I weren't so doggone tied up with cutting records and making movies. But the girl I marry will have to like the way I live—I'd sooner go out and get a hamburger than go to a nightclub. And she'll have to like Memphis."

Elvis insists that "Memphis will always be my real home." Yet he is in fact a Mississippian. He was born dirt-poor in a two-room shack in Tupelo (pop. 17,221), the surviving member of twin boys whom Gladys Presley named Jessie Garon and Elvis Aron. "My mama never let me out of her sight," he recalls. "I couldn't go down to the creek with the other kids. Sometimes, when I was little, I used to run off. Mama would whip me, and I thought she didn't love me."

As a boy Elvis never studied music, but he had a cheap radio which he would listen to for hours at a time. "I liked to hear Grand Ol' Opry," he recalls, "and I loved the records of cowboy singers like Roy Acuff and Hank Snow and especially Gene Austin. I sang some with my folks in the Assembly of God church choir. It was a small church, so you couldn't sing too loud.

"Getting a guitar was mama's idea. I beat on it a year or two and never did learn much about it. I still know only a few major chords. I don't read music, but I know what I like."

When Elvis was 13, his family moved from Tupelo to a public-housing project in Memphis. There he attended Humes High School and played football. But he weighed only 145 pounds and was too light to make first-string. The rejection endowed him with a sensitivity about his athletic prowess that he nurses still. After his graduation in 1953, he found employment on the assembly line of a precision-tool company, at a furniture factory that made plastic tables and as a driver for the Crown Electric Co.

In the summer of 1954 Elvis had a multimillion-dollar inspiration or, as he explains it, "just a urgin'." He went to the Sun Record Co., plunked down some money and twanged out a tune on his guitar. "It sounded like somebody beating on a bucket lid," Elvis grins—exposing his sparkling studio-capped teeth. "The engineer there told me I had an unusual voice—isn't that something? He said he might call me up sometime."

Months went by without word from the engineer, and Elvis kept driving his truck for $35 a week. At night he attended a trade school and studied to be an electrician. To pay the tuition he ushered in a movie house. Whenever he could find time, he went to all-night "singin's." "Some of those spirituals had big, heavy rhythm beats like a rock-'n'-roll song," Elvis remembers. "That music didn't hurt anybody, and it sure made you feel good."

In the spring of 1955, Elvis received a telephone call from a man named Sam Phillips at Sun Records. Could Elvis come down to record a ballad called *Without You*? "I tried it," Elvis recalls, "but I just couldn't do it the way they wanted me to. Then Mr. Phillips took a coffee break, and I started fooling around singing a song with a rock-'n'-roll beat. They liked it, and we recorded *That's All Right, Mama.* Then we made *I Don't Care if the Sun Don't Shine* backed up by *Blue Moon of Kentucky*."

When the songs were first played on radio station WHBQ, Elvis hid in a movie theater. "I thought people'd laugh at me," he explains. "Some did, and some are still laughing, I guess." But that week, 7,000 copies of the record were sold in Memphis alone. Elvis was on his way.

Six months later Parker agreed to handle "Mr. Presley" and booked him on tours with such established personalities as Hank Snow and Andy Griffith. By the fall of 1955 the reverberations had reached Manhattan. Persuaded by Colonel Parker, RCA bought his contract for $35,000. Additionally, Elvis received a $5,000 "bonus for signing." It was more money than he had ever seen in his life.

In cities like Jacksonville, Fla., and Norfolk, Va., Elvis ambled out on stage wearing pink silk shirts, tight, black, pegged pants, and cat boots over pink-and-black socks. For a moment he stood as limp and livid as



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Valentino in a wax museum. Then he spraddled his long legs into a pivoting stance, took a few harsh swipes at the guitar resting against his flat belly and started swinging his hips from side to side. Spasms ran through both legs and soon the entire midsection of his body was jolting as if he'd swallowed a jackhammer. The eyes glazed under their long, curly lashes; the petulant, baby-doll lips parted and a peculiar sound emerged—"Hi wa-ha-haunt yew-hoo, hi need hee-yew-hoo-hoo; hi luh-huh-huv yew-hewww. . . ."

Few recognizable words could be heard, but the teen-agers grasped his message nonetheless. They mobbed the stage, tore at his clothes and snipped at his pomaded pompadour.

In January, 1956, RCA Victor released its first Presley record. Called *Heartbreak Hotel,* it was a blood-stirring dirge of love and loneliness that burned up the jukeboxes and eventually sold two million copies. Six months later Elvis helped Steve Allen beat Ed Sullivan in the Sunday-at-eight television battle. Sullivan affected disdain for Elvis ("I'll not have him at any price—he's not my cup of tea") but soon reversed himself and signed the young singer for $50,000—more than Sullivan had ever paid anybody.

Hal Wallis brought Elvis to Hollywood for a screen test and signed him to a seven-year contract which has since been extended. Colonel Parker hired midgets to parade as "The Elvis Presley Midget Fan Club," and closed deals with 78 notions' manufacturers licensing them to sell Elvis merchandise.

Not everyone swooned, and sizable shock waves of outrage swept the country. Leading newspapers denounced him as "lewd and obscene." Ministers mounted whole sermons against him. Other detractors spread stories that his pernicious noise was actually produced, like the voice of the cricket, by some violent stridulation of the legs.

The criticisms stung both Elvis and his family. "I didn't do no dirty body movements," he announced self-righteously. "When I sing, I just start jumping. If I stand still, I'm dead."

Elvis didn't stand still, and the sound blared out relentlessly from a score of phenomenal platters: *Blue Suede Shoes, Love Me Tender, I Got a Woman, I Want You, I Need You, Doncha' Think It's Time?, Too Much, All Shook Up, Loving You, Jailhouse Rock, Hard-Headed Woman, I Got Stung, A Fool Such As I, A Big Hunk o' Love,* and two six-million-copy jewels of the jukeboxes, *Hound Dog* and *Don't Be Cruel.*

By 1957 Elvis had four Cadillacs—yellow, black, white, and pink-and-black. He also had a royal-purple Lincoln Continental, a yellow Isetta and a plain black motorcycle. He built a colonial mansion called Graceland for his parents in Memphis. The mansion's fences were made in the shape of musical staves peppered with iron-grille notes. Fans climbed over these fences, pressed their ears to Elvis's private bedroom and carried away cups of water from the pool where Elvis had difficulty learning to swim.

When Elvis went to Hollywood, he was pampered almost to the point of absurdity. A few weeks later his mama went out to take a look. "Why, there's somebody to comb his hair for him," she exclaimed, "and even a man to help him get dressed and another man to ask him if he's ready to work."

His first film, *Love Me Tender,* opened to unanimous catcalls and jeers from the critics. Yet it earned between five and six times its cost. Critics found his third film, *Jailhouse Rock,* equally obnoxious, and one reviewer commented, sarcastically, that Elvis was "sensitively cast as a slob." Gradually Elvis learned to accept criticism. Today, confronted with a scathing review, he just shrugs and says, "That's the way the mop flops."

In the spring of 1958 the Grand Panjandrum of Jump became just plain Private Presley, Army serial number 533 107 61. Youngsters shrieked.

When Elvis arrived at Fort Chaffee, Ark., eight public-information officers were assigned to help record the momentous event. The famed locks were shorn, boxed and burned under orders. Elvis said, "Thank you, sir" to privates, corporals and sergeants alike. And the press recorded his most banal utterances: "I had a good night's sleep and I decided to get up."

Just before Elvis sailed for Germany, his mother contracted hepatitis and died, at 42, of heart failure. Gladys Smith Presley had been the most significant influence on Elvis's young life, and any recollection of her still chokes him up. "I think of her every single day," he says. "Sometimes I can see her as plainly as though she were still here. If I never do anything really wrong, it'll all be because of her. She wouldn't ever *let* me do anything wrong."

For the next two years The Pelvis stood at parade rest. He passed up a Special Services job entertaining the troops and accepted a more mundane assignment as a jeep driver at the U.S. Army base in Friedberg. "I wanted to change people's opinion that I was just some guy with sideburns yelling and jumping around," he explains. "I didn't want to take any special privileges or favors or use influence."

During his military stint Elvis seemed to withdraw more and more into himself. He felt less and less at home with intrusive fans and reporters. "A Paris paper said I preferred American girls to European girls," he explains when asked for the reasons behind his near-total disappearance. "I got thousands of letters from offended people and had to make a whole lot of explanations. It wasn't true, and even if it had been true, I wouldn't have said it, but it shows how much trouble a few careless words can cause. It's better just to say nothing."

During his absence Elvis had earned $1.3 million from record royalties; upon his discharge RCA announced that it had received a whopping 1,275,000 advance orders for *Stuck on You,* his first post-Army disc. For his first TV appearance he earned $125,000—the highest fee paid for a guest shot in the history of broadcasting. He seemed thinner and more mature. The hips didn't gyrate quite so much as they had before; the sullen face was more amiably composed. He wore a tuxedo over his boots and occasionally mouthed lyrics that people could understand.

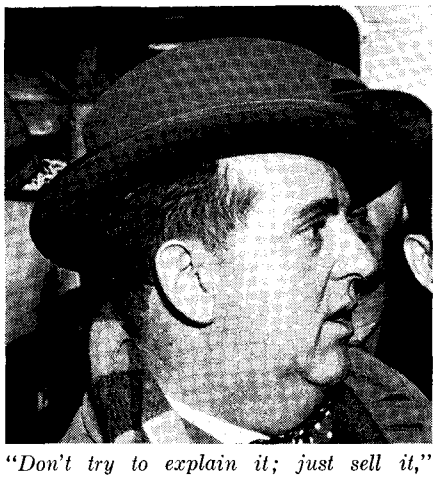
He returned to Hollywood with an entourage of 10 in a private railroad car. But despite this initial ostentation, he began to lead a relatively quiet personal life. His dress became less jazzy; his cars were fewer in number and more conservative. He collected books on medicine ("I always wanted to be a doctor") and classical records by Caruso and Kirsten Flagstad. He seldom went out. Gradually the glittering people have stopped inviting him places. He could not be happier.

From time to time rumors have swept the movie colony to the effect that Elvis is secretly married to Priscilla Beaulieu, an Air Force captain's daughter whom he met in Germany and who lived in Graceland while finishing high school in Memphis. Elvis denies the stories vehemently. So does Colonel Parker. "Elvis promised to give me three weeks' notice if he ever gets married," Parker explains, "so I'd have time to tie down some pretty good promotional deals."

Some of Elvis's friends wonder if the constant promotional deals, the records and the heavy schedule of three or four films per year—each timed for release during school vacations—aren't beginning to take their toll. "The money is *so* big," one friend exclaims, "that he's always doing what everybody else wants him to do. He's a lonely guy in many ways."

On the surface Elvis remains unruffled. "I always wanted to *be* somebody, and feel like somebody," he explains, "but I never expected to be anybody *important.* I figure if these things bother me too much, though, I could always go back to driving a truck." □

*Comforting his mother, Elvis appears at press conference before Army induction.*



*"Don't try to explain it; just sell it," says Elvis's manager, Col. Tom Parker.*

*"Memphis will always be my real home," Elvis insists. The fences surrounding Graceland, his sprawling colonial mansion, are shaped like musical staves filled with iron-grille notes.*



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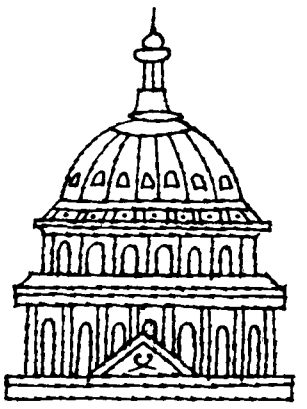
# Editorials



## A cheer for Congress

President Johnson deserves great credit for getting a prodigious number of admirable bills through Congress. In the past few months, Congress has enacted a dozen major proposals. Among the most notable:

1. The voting-rights bill, which eliminates discriminatory literacy tests and calls for Government lawsuits to wipe out the poll tax.

2. The medicare bill, which provides old people with two months of low-priced hospital care and helps pay other medical costs.

3. The education bill, which, for the first time, authorizes federal funds for general support of local schools. The $1.3 billion goes primarily to low-income areas.

4. The $7.5 billion housing bill, which includes rent supplements to poor families who could not otherwise obtain decent homes.

5. The Appalachia bill, which authorizes more than one billion dollars for economic development of the 11-state mountain area.

In all the praise for Johnson's program, however, it still seems to be assumed that Congress is some kind of political swamp, a giant bog of inertia marked by mossy boulders of obstruction. A couple of years ago, in fact, when President Kennedy's legislative program appeared to be blocked at every turn, many Washington observers argued that Congress itself was obsolete, an anachronism in need of radical reform. The fact remains, though, that the "Johnson program" that passed this year is Congress's program too.

Much of the credit, of course, goes to the President, who not only introduced the major bills but also persuaded and cajoled and pressed for their enactment. Part of the credit, too, goes to Larry O'Brien and his staff, who maintain the best liaison between the White House and Capitol Hill in many years. Credit, in a way, goes to Barry Goldwater, whose ill-fated campaign against the Johnson "Great Society" ended with the largest Democratic majorities since 1937—68 to 32 in the Senate and 294 to 140 in the House. And finally, the major bills that Congress has passed embody ideas that most Americans now accept as right and proper. It is clearly time for the United States to assure its citizens the right to vote, the right to adequate education, housing and jobs; and, as Victor Hugo put it, "No army can withstand the strength of an idea whose time has come."

When the time came, Congress proved itself no anachronism. It still has its faults—notably the seniority system—but the craft that even Senator Dirksen once described as "an old water-logged scow" showed that it could move with remarkable speed. In doing so, it has served the people well.

## What kind of war is this?

It is hard to disagree with President Johnson's announced aims in Vietnam. He has proclaimed those traditional goals for which Americans have always been prepared to fight: freedom, self-government, resistance to aggression. Yet something new and ugly is happening in the way we fight for those goals. It began, perhaps, with the decision to drop bombs and napalm on Communist-dominated peasant villages, killing and maiming the people we profess to defend from aggression. In recent weeks, the gap between our actions and our goals has become still wider. Some examples:

- A Buddhist monastery wrecked by bombs. . . . At least two monks killed, 10 injured. . . . It was described as a mistake.
- South Vietnamese troops beat and torture prisoners. . . . Photographs show one prisoner having water forced into his mouth until he talks. . . . Another savagely kicked while tied hand and foot.
- U.S. marines, under sniper attack, set a number of peasant villages afire with grenades and flame throwers. . . . In one case a woman and four children are found burned to death in the wreckage.

These episodes, not large in themselves, all appear to reflect an increasing disregard for the difference between enemies and noncombatants. It is easy—and inadequate—to answer that war is hell. It is easy—and inadequate—to say that the Communists have committed atrocities. It used to be axiomatic that there could be no victory in Vietnam without the support of the Vietnamese people. To the extent that we forget that axiom, we lose sight not only of our principles but of our objective. Our commitment to the people of South Vietnam is a commitment to protect them, not to destroy them in the name of "the free world."

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